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WINTER EVENINGS.

VOL. II.

Winter Evenings:

OR,

LUCUBRATIONS

ON

LIFE AND LETTERS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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Winter

Winter Evenings:

OR,

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ON

LIFE and LETTERS.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAP. I.

Of the Names introduced by Engliſh Writers to diſtinguiſh the Characters which they deſcribe.

SIR,

SOMEBODY, I think, has very properly taken notice of the odd names which Dr. Watts has uſed to diſtinguiſh thoſe characters, which he introduces to illuſtrate his moral inſtructions. The characters are commonly grave; but the names are often ſuch as give them ſomething of a ludicrous air. He was a man of learning, judgment, and angelic goodneſs; but I know not whether his *taſte* in literary matters has

not been too highly appreciated. I do not recollect the fictitious name which was ſelected as an inſtance of abſurdity; but in looking for it, I found thoſe of Polonides, Polyramus, Fluvio, and Credonius, all of which are ſtrangely uncouth. Such are alſo in the ſame book, Jocander, Poſitivo, Scitorio, Scintillo, Thebaldino, Niveo, and Plumbinus.

If writers mean to give their characters the appearance of truth, they ſhould not ſelect ancient names for living perſons, much leſs names formed by their own capricious invention, and ſuch as never were given to men of any age or country. We know, indeed, that the name is a maſque; but the maſk of a reſpectable character ſhould be neither a monſter, nor a caricatura.

Ficta voluptatis cauſa, ſint proxima veris.

Let all fiction which is intended to pleaſe, approach as nearly as poſſible to reality.

I own I am not pleaſed with the generality of our dialogue writers, who give their perſons Greek and Roman names, though at the ſame time they make them talk like Engliſhmen, and allude to modern cuſtoms, manners, and places. There is an incongruity in theſe which leſſens much of the entertainment which the dialogue might otherwiſe afford.

Why

Why may not modern names be admitted into modern dialogue? You will ſay perhaps, Palæmon and Philander, Eugenius and Euſebius, have a prettier ſound than Smith, Johnſon, Walker, Benſon, Hudſon. The Latin and Greek languages have a prettier ſoumd than the Engliſh, and therefore you may for the ſame reaſon write the whole dialogue in the ſame language. It is another plea for adopting Greek and Latin names, that as the Romans did not uſe the ceremonious ſalutations of the moderns, a great deal of trouble is avoïded by omitting the unmeaning modes of addreſs, Sir, Madam, Your Grace, and My Lord, which ſome imagine neceſſary when they introduce a converſation between ſuch perſonages as Mr. Smith, Mr. Johnſon, Mrs. Melvill, Lord Clarendon, and the Duke of Kent.

But I think theſe ceremonious appellations may be omitted with leſs violation of probability and propriety than is cauſed by introducing Greeks and Romans talking about the doctrines of Chriſtianity, the laws of our country, and other ſubjects, on which they could not be made to converſe without a violent anachroniſm.

When the ſubject relates entirely to antiquity, antient names are not improper; indeed, as the ancients may be ſuppoſed better acquainted with

ſuch ſubjects than the moderns, the mind is pleaſed with the propriety of introducing them as the interlocutors.

But while the matter is good, it is not right to cavil at trifles which are no more than forms. Perhaps my remarks are hypercritical: that they may not be tedious, I will here conclude them.

I am, SIR,

to borrow one of Dr. Watts's names,

Your humble Servant,

POLYRAMUS.

SIR,

I am a great lover of learning, but not having had the advantage of a liberal education, I am totally unacquainted with the learned languages; and I lament the defect as a real misfortune. I hear much of their excellence, and you may ſuppoſe it a great mortification to me, that I am unable to read thoſe books which have been celebrated as the fineſt productions of the human intellect. I endeavour to compenſate my defect by reading Engliſh authors; but I often ſtumble upon Latin mottoes and ſentences, which I ſuppoſe to contain ſome jewel, too precious to be expoſed to vulgar

vulgar view, and locked up in a caſket of which I have not the key.

But I am not only puzzled and mortified with mottoes and ſentences which I do not underſtand, but often with odd names of characters in moral writers, and of perſons who converſe in fictitious dialogues, which, I have no doubt, contain ſome ſignificant meaning, which I am at a loſs to unriddle.

Dr. More in his dialogues introduces the following perſons; Philotheus, Bathynous, Sophron, Philopolis, Euiſter, Hylobares, and *Cuphophron*. Every one of theſe is expreſſive of the character introduced; but I ſhould have been quite in the dark about them, and have wondered at their oddity, if the Doctor had not obligingly explained their meaning in one of the firſt pages in his volume. I wiſh the example had been followed by many others, who introduce me into the company of perſons whoſe characters I do not know, becauſe I do not underſtand the meaning of their crabbed names.

I humbly conceive that it would be quite as well if writers ſuffered the characters to open themſelves to the reader in the courſe of the converſation; and I ſee no good reaſon why chriſtian

and ſurnames of honeſt Engliſhmen, may not be given to perſons who come forward to talk on ſubjects which they muſt underſtand far better than the wiſeſt of the antients; I mean ſuch as Dr. More diſcuſſes, the attributes of God, and his Providence in this world; but in truth, I find, on enquiry, that theſe names are not the names of antients. They occur not in hiſtory, but are compounded of words that never met before, to expreſs ideas which can only be underſtood by thoſe who are acquainted with the learned languages. Such names appear to me to have no more propriety than ſome of thoſe which in the times of fanaticiſm were uſed by the Puritans, ſuch as, Praiſe-God Barebones, Make-peace Heaton, Kill-ſin Pimple, and Fly-debate Roberts; the names of a jury impannelled in Suſſex during the uſurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

I acknowledge, however, that the antient and high ſounding names adopted in Engliſh dialogues, give a dignity to the diſcourſe; but I, who am a mere Engliſhman, wiſh to ſee Engliſhmen introduced without being aſhamed of their names, and do not know why the names of Clarendon, Temple, Raleigh, and a thouſand others equally well ſounding, might not anſwer the purpoſe as well as names borrowed from Greece and Rome: And, as to the ſignificancy of the above mention-

ed

ed compound appellations, what ſhould I be the wiſer without an explanatory table for ſuch names as thoſe in Dr. More's liſt? What muſt I think of *Cuphophron?* I ſhould not know the ſenſe; and I am ſure I could not admire the ſound. Few Gothic names are of more difficult pronunciation.

But I ought not to judge, as I profeſs myſelf no ſcholar. I only ſubmit to you my complaint as an Engliſh reader. I ſhall be much obliged to you to deſire gentlemen who write dialogues, and introduce ſtrange names as exemplifications of their inſtruction, either to give modern names, or ſuch as are known in hiſtory, or elſe to add an explanatory table.

I am, SIR, Your's, &c.

AN ENGLISH READER.

CHAP. II.

Of Caligula's Attempt to abolish the Works of Homer, Virgil, and Livy.

THE tyrants who oppreſſed Rome in the decline of her empire were not ſatisfied with depriving men of their civil rights, but often attempted to chain the mind in ſervitude, and to domineer with abſolute controul, where they certainly had no claim to pre-eminence, in the republic of literature. One of the moſt ſingular and barbarous attempts upon record was that of Caligula, who formed a deſign of aboliſhing the poems of Homer, and had nearly accompliſhed his purpoſe of baniſhing from all the libraries of his time, the buſts and the works of Livy and Virgil. He could not bear that the noble efforts of genius, breathing a ſpirit of liberty and virtue, which he could not but hate, ſhould continue to diffuſe ſuch ſentiments as muſt teach all who imbibed them to deteſt him as a monſter.

The following is the account given by Suetonius: "Cogitavit etiam de Homeri carmini-
"bus abolendis. Cur enim ſibi non licere, di-
"cens, quod Platoni licuiſſet, qui eum a civi-
"tate, quam conſtituebat, ejecerit? Sed Vir-
"gilii

" gilii et Titi Livii ſcripta et imagines, paulum " abfuit, quin ex omnibus bibliothecis amoveret; " quorum alterum ut nullius ingenii, minimæque " doctrinæ; alterum, ut verboſum, in hiſtoriâ " negligentemque carpebat *."

Flagitious as was his reign, I know not whether any thing he could do, would have been more injurious to mankind than if he had ſucceeded in extinguiſhing theſe glorious lights. The atrocious malignity of his immoral and tyrannical actions was confined to his own age, but this would have deſcended to poſterity, and continued the effects of his deſpotiſm long after the great teacher Death had humbled his pride, by reducing him to the duſt, not diſtinguiſhable from the pooreſt wretch whom his inſolence deſpiſed, and his cruelty perſecuted. Indeed his deſign was impracticable, for, with all his power, he could not have prevented ſome votary of taſte and genius from preſerving in ſecret the noble reliques of theſe illuſtrious ornaments of human nature.

I have no doubt but the ſame diſpoſition which could form a wiſh to aboliſh Homer, would have rejoiced, if it had been poſſible, to have

* Sueton. Calig. cap. 34.

extinguiſhed the ſun, or to have dried up the ocean. Such tyranny exhibits a melancholy monument of human wickedneſs, and at the ſame time furniſhes a ſalutary warning to the world not to truſt enormous power in the hands of a fellow creature. Human nature retains ſo much of inherent malignity, that he who poſſeſſes power uncontrouled will be in imminent danger of imitating and nearly reſembling the parent of all evil.

Dic mihi, ſi fueris, tu leo qualis eris.

But the wicked never want the artifice of giving to their malice ſome colourable pretence. Caligula alleged that he ſhould be juſtified in the abolition of Homer by the example of Plato, who baniſhed the poets from his imaginary republic. But what was Plato's motive? a deſire to preſerve the morals of youth, whoſe ideas he thought were corrupted and diſtorted by an initiation into the ſtrange myſteries of fiction, inſtead of the knowledge of ſubſtantial and practical realities. He did not mean to aboliſh their works, or to preclude men, whoſe reaſon was mature, from the ſtudy of them. He only thought, as many others have thought, that on the minds of young men, the ſlaves of paſſion and fancy, they might operate in the ſame manner as novels and romances have been obſerved to

do,

do, in firing the paſſions and miſleading the imagination. But was Caligula's motive for their expulſion a fear that they might diffuſe corruption? No ſuch apprehenſion ever agitated his boſom. His fear was leſt they ſhould teach a virtue to which he could never attain, and raiſe a ſpirit inimical to his manners, his perſon, and his tyranny. He muſt have known that, among all the perſons deſcribed by Homer, he was worthy only to be ranked with ſuch wretches as Therſites. Before himſelf could ſhine, he knew that all true glory muſt be ſhaded, as the ſun muſt retire, before the feeble light, which ariſes from a foul vapour, can become viſible.

But he aſſigns a reaſon for the expulſion of Virgil and Livy. Virgil, ſays he, has no genius, and a very ſmall ſhare of learning; and Livy is verboſe in his ſtyle, and negligent in his narrative.

Caligula muſt be excepted againſt as an incompetent judge both of learning and genius; for it requires a conſiderable ſhare of both to form a juſt opinion of the degree in which they are poſſeſſed by a writer. If Virgil had not genius, he would not, I think, have continued ſo long the delight and admiration of all who have read his works with taſte. He has Longinus's

criterion of genius, the united voice of various ages and nations, in his favour. He has Caligula, and a few other men of debauched taſte, againſt him, which is almoſt as great an honour as the general approbation.

The truth is, he has a remarkably happy union of genius with learning; and he has alſo a judgment to guide him in the conduct of both, with that propriety which enables him to delight at once the reaſon and the fancy. Genius without learning often delights the fancy, but the judgment muſt in the mean time ſleep, or the pleaſure will be diminiſhed and interrupted.

Whoever has read the works of Virgil in the excellent edition of Heyne will want no argument to convince him that Virgil did not deſerve the ſtigma which Caligula would have fixed on him,—*minimæ doctrinæ*; and whoever has ſenſibility will feel the falſehood of the detracting ſpirit that dared to aſſert of him that he was *nullius ingenii*. It muſt ever be a ſingular honour to ſuffer detraction from ſuch men as Caligula.

It is very eaſy to aſſign a reaſon for his diſlike of Livy. A moſt arbitrary tyrant and moſt profligate man could not but wiſh to deſtroy the works of an hiſtorian who exhibits the aſſertors

of liberty, and the virtuous patriots of a virtuous republic, in ſuch colours as muſt at once excite love and lead to imitation. Caligula's charge of verboſity in the ſtyle of Livy is utterly groundleſs. He expreſſes himſelf with a noble brevity, and with that conciſe dignity which evinced that he had a Roman ſoul; ſuch a ſoul as was adequate to the noble undertaking of a Roman hiſtory. The other charge, that of negligence in his account of facts, originated from the malignant wiſh of the tyrant to diminiſh the credit of an hiſtorian who related deeds of ſo bright a ſplendour, as muſt render the page in which his own ſhould be recorded, foul indeed. Time has unfortunately done much to accompliſh the nefarious wiſh of Caligula, in the deſtruction of the works of Livy; but enough remains to delight every man of taſte, and warm the boſom with magnanimous ſentiments, and the generous ardour of public virtue.

It is greatly to be lamented when Princes, inſtead of patronizing genius, endeavour to repreſs its aſpiring vigour. Such a conduct ariſes in ſuch men as Caligula from envy and malice; but a neglect of genius is occaſioned in others by ignorance, and a total deficiency of taſte for works which the world applauds. Even Hadrian, we are told, wiſhed to aboliſh Homer's works,

works, and ſubſtitute in his room the poems of one Antimachus. He thought it was time to leave off admiring old Homer, that he had been admired long enough, and that he ſhould gratify the paſſion for novelty by introducing in his place a modern verſifier. He puts one in mind of the rough warrior who told the captain, to whoſe care he had conſigned ſome fine pictures which he had taken as ſpoils, that if they were loſt or injured they ſhould be renewed at his expence.

Men of ſenſe look down upon ſuch emperors, when they dictate in matters of taſte, with as much contempt as the emperors can do on the meaneſt of their vaſſals. When learning is diffuſed throughout a nation, the works of taſte and genius will flouriſh independently of the ſmiles or the frowns of princes.

CHAP. III.

Of ſome Paſſages in Eraſmus on the Happineſs of Marriage.—Remarks.

AMONG the marks of modern profligacy may be enumerated the reluctance with which young men enter the marriage ſtate. Their affections are in vain ſolicited by any charms beſides thoſe of lucre. The times ſeem to be paſt, when in the prime of life virtuous love led young men to ſelect a companion for the amiable qualities of her mind and perſon, independently of all pecuniary conſiderations. The loveliеſt of women may now pine in hopeleſs celibacy; for, if they cannot purchaſe a huſband as they would purchaſe a gown, with the contents of their purſe, they may live and die without one. In vain has nature given them the vermal cheek, and the eye of ſenſibility, if fortune has refuſed her more brilliant gifts. Young men gaze indeed like children at the peacock, and turn away without any tenderneſs of ſentiment, or at leaſt without any wiſh to poſſeſs the beauty which they admire, on honourable conditions.

It is indeed obſervable that young men of the preſent age too often conſider marriage as an evil

in

in itſelf, and only to be engaged in when the pecuniary advantages attending it afford a compenſation. For the ſake of the good, it ſeems, they ſometimes condeſcend to accept the evil. A moſt inſulting opinion, and no leſs unreaſonable and untrue than contumelious; for marriage, prudent and affectionate marriage, is favourable to every virtue that can contribute to the comfort and happineſs of the individual, while it moſt eſſentially ſerves ſociety.

I was thinking on this ſubject when I accidentally opened a little book by Eraſmus on the Art of Letter Writing. He gives models of letters on various ſubjects, and, under the appearance of affording hints in a didactic way for the uſe of ſtudents, contrives to recommend ſeveral moſt uſeful things with great force of argument, and in a very entertaining manner. I happened to open the book in the place where he is writing a perſuaſive to marriage, and I was ſo well pleaſed with ſeveral of his topics, that I determined to ſelect a few of them for the conſideration of my readers. I mean not literally to tranſlate, or to give the whole of his perſuaſive. There are parts in it which one cannot entirely approve, but there are others which every heart, that is not ſpoiled by faſhion and falſe philoſophy, muſt admire.

Is there any friendſhip, ſays he, among mortals, comparable to that between man and wife? For the love of you ſhe has ceaſed to value the tenderneſs of parents, brothers, ſiſters; to you alone ſhe looks for happineſs, on you ſhe depends, with you ſhe wiſhes to live and to die.

Are you rich? you have one who will endeavour to preſerve and to increaſe your property. Are you in narrow circumſtances? you have one who will aſſiſt you faithfully in the purſuit of gain. If you enjoy proſperity, ſhe will double your happineſs; if you are in adverſity, ſhe will conſole you, ſhe will ſit by your ſide, ſhe will wait upon you with all the aſſiduity of love, and only wiſh that ſhe could appropriate the misfortune which gives you pain. Is there any pleaſure to be compared with an union of hearts like this?

I muſt add the next paſſage in his own words.

Si domi agis, adeſt quæ ſolitudinis tædium depellat; ſi foris, eſt quæ diſcedentem oſculo proſequatur, abſentem deſideret, redeuntem læta excipiat.

She is the ſweet companion of your youth, and the pleaſant ſolace of your old age.

What can be more odious (he proceeds) than that man, who, as if he were born for himſelf, lives

lives for himſelf, heaps up riches for himſelf, ſpares for himſelf, ſpends for himſelf, loves no human creature but himſelf, is beloved by none.

How will you value your happineſs (he adds)

——————Ubi quis tibi parvulus aula,
Luſerit Æneas.

qui tuos tuæque conjugis vultus referat, qui te BLANDA BALBUTIE PATREM APPELLITET.

I know, ſays he, that you will object that all this happineſs depends upon the diſpoſition of the wife more than on the marriage ſtate. A marriage may be thus happy if the wife be good; but ſuppoſe her ill-natured, ſuppoſe her unchaſte, and ſuppoſe the children undutiful. Believe me, the bad huſband uſually makes the bad wife. You certainly have it in your power to chuſe a good one; but what if ſhe ſhould afterwards be ſpoiled? Eraſmus confidently replies, A good wife may indeed be ſpoiled by a bad huſband, but a bad wife is uſually reformed by a good one. FALSÒ UXORES ACCUSAMUS. No body, he aſſures us (I am afraid too confidently), ever had a bad wife but by his own fault. And with reſpect to children, good children, ſays he, are uſually born of good parents; but however they may have been born, they commonly become juſt ſuch as they are made by education.

But

But why, continues he, do you ſo anxiouſly enumerate the inconveniencies of marriage, juſt as if celibacy were totally free from them, or as if any mode of human life were not ſubject to evil and misfortune. If you would have no inconvenient circumſtances in your ſtate, you muſt leave this life. *Sin intra humanam conditionem animum contineas, nihil eſt conjugali vita, neque tutius, neque tranquillius, neque jucundius, neque amabilius, neque felicius.* But if one can reſtrain one's deſires within the boundaries of happineſs which belong to human nature, there is no ſtate ſafer, more tranquil, pleaſanter, lovelier, nor happier than the conjugal.

Though Eraſmus is ſeeking hints to ſupply the young letter writer with matter for his compoſitions, yet I cannot but think that he ſpoke his honeſt ſentiments, becauſe he ſpeaks with warmth, and, I believe, meant obliquely to cenſure thoſe unnatural inſtitutions of the Romiſh church, which tend to diſcourage marriage. He is very copious on the ſubject, and advances many arguments which I have not room to tranſcribe, and which indeed will appear to much greater advantage in the original. I muſt not conceal that he has alſo a diſſuaſive from marriage; but it really contains no argument which is valid, or which is worthy of repetition.

I am

I am of opinion, that the reluctance of young men of fortune to enter into the ſtate ariſes not from any ſettled conviction of the unreaſonableneſs of the inſtitution, but from profligacy, thoughtleſſneſs, falſe ideas of pleaſure, and a want of rational ideas of human life and the nature of human happineſs. But, whatever is the cauſe, the effect is certainly unhappy both to men and women. Men, indeed, in conſequence of their libertiniſm, gratify their natural deſires in the haunts of vice; and ſo much the worſe, for they thus add ſin to miſery. Women are often kept in a ſtate of celibacy, for which nature never deſigned them, and to which, I may ſay, without attributing to them indecency or immodeſty, they are in general not much inclined. It is happy, however, that reſerve and virtue ſo far prevail among them, as for the moſt part to prevent them from forming improper connexions, in conſequence of being prevented from making a matrimonial alliance by the diſinclination of the men. It is to be hoped they will ſtill preſerve their dignity by preſerving their innocence; but their caſe is hard, and nothing which a wiſe legiſlature can do to alleviate it ſhould be omitted. Many nations have taken great pains to encourage marriage, ours places ſome obſtacles in its way, which, though often ſalutary in the higher claſſes, are perhaps injurious in the lower.

A reforma-

A reformation of manners, among the young men who lead the fashion, would contribute most to the encouragement of marriage; for where libertinism greatly prevails, celibacy, which is favourable to it, will be predominant. Perhaps, if women were instructed in useful as well as ornamental arts, and were less expensive in dress and diversions, the rest might be left to the natural operation of their beauty and agreeable accomplishments. As the small-pox is in great measure defeated, they certainly never appeared more beautiful than in the present time, and accomplishments were never pursued with more ardour, or advanced to higher perfection.

CHAP. IV.

Of drinking Health at Table.

Tardè Cyathos mihi das; cedò sanè; benè mihi; benè vobis. PLAUTUS.

SIR,

I LATELY addreſſed to you a few obſervations on the omiſſion of grace at table, and I now beg leave to add ſome remarks on another omiſſion which faſhion ſeems to recommend, but which is countenanced neither by the examples of the antients, nor by reaſon, nor by a ſenſe of propriety. I obſerved, on my viſit to my old friend in London, that the friendly practice of drinking health at dinner was in moſt of the faſhionable families very much on the decline, and in many totally omitted. Indeed the omiſſion ariſes from a principle which ſeems very much to prevail in the preſent age, and which aims at the abolition of all forms and ceremonies, as meaning nothing, and at the ſame time giving trouble and excluding eaſe. Forms and ceremonies undoubtedly have their utility, or they would not have been univerſally retained in every age and nation which hiſtory has recorded. But allowing ſome forms to be without meaning, I cannot ſuppoſe,

ſuppoſe, unleſs I throw a ſeverer reflection on the friendſhip and hoſpitality of modern times than I chuſe, that the drinking of health is, without exception, a ſenſeleſs and empty ceremony. A man of a warm and friendly heart uſually feels a ſentiment of cordial kindneſs when he holds the cup of refreſhment in his hand, and wiſhes health and happineſs to his friends who are partaking around him of the ſame innocent and neceſſary pleaſure.

The cuſtom prevailed among the Greeks, who carried the elegance which they diſplayed in the polite arts to the table and ſocial circle, aſſembled to enjoy the pleaſures of the palate and of diſcourſe. Homer, indeed, has given the model in the firſt book of the Iliad, who ſays of the gods at their feaſt,

Χρυσείος δεπάεσσι
Δειδέχατ' ἀλλήλους.

The manner of drinking to each other reſembled what is called among us *pledging*. The perſon who drank to his friend was ſaid προπίνειν, or to drink firſt. He drank a part of the cup, and then handed the reſt to the friend whom he had named. The words which paſſed on the occaſion were προπίνω σοι καλως, to which the perſon

perſon ſaluted λαμβάνω ἀπό σου ηδεως, which may be thus freely tranſlated. I have the honour to drink to you.—I pledge you with pleaſure.

It was alſo the cuſtom, after due reſpect paid to the gods, to drink to abſent friends; and, as an emblem of ſincerity, it was eſtabliſhed as a law never to dilute the wine drunk on this occaſion.

I ſhall not trouble you with various proofs that the cuſtom of drinking health is juſtified by the example of the politeſt people of antiquity. It would be eaſy to collect them from the writers on antiquities; but the inſtance alleged is ſufficient for my purpoſe, and will ſerve to confute thoſe who hint that the cuſtom is unpolite.

There is ſurely ſomething peculiarly brutal in ſitting down to meals without ever thinking of God or man, neglecting the grace, and omitting the form of wiſhing health and happineſs to thoſe who ſit at the ſame table. We have ſeen that it is contrary to the practice of antiquity, and of almoſt all people in the world, who, though they varied in the forms, agreed in the eſſential points, in giving glory to God on high, and teſtifying good will towards men.

Your's, &c.

A RATIONAL FORMALIST.

The omiſſion of drinking health is by no means general; but as it has been countenanced at the tables of perſons of faſhion, it may probably deſcend to their imitators in lower life, and in time become univerſal. My correſpondent has therefore very properly expreſſed his diſapprobation of it. It certainly diſplays ſomething of ſelfiſhneſs, and it is contrary to the general ſenſe of the moſt enlightened and poliſhed people. It can only be juſtified with certain qualifications and reſtrictions. It is troubleſome, in a large company, to drink the health of every gueſt reſpectively, and troubleſome formalities ought not to be ſcrupulouſly adhered to, when they contravene the very purpoſe of the meeting, which was certainly to promote chearfulneſs and eaſe.

But forms, not evidently and intolerably burthenſome and fooliſh, are certainly to be retained, as they conſtitute thoſe outworks which often preſerve the interior parts from aſſault and deſtruction. The drinking of health is ſignificant of that good will which ought to prevail among fellow creatures, happily enjoying the bounty of their common Parent and Creator; and though it may be attended with a little trouble, yet there is a great decency and propriety in it, and to bear the trouble may be conſidered as an exerciſe of benevolence.

I cannot help expreſſing a ſentiment of pity, or rather of contempt, for perſons who think to recommend themſelves as genteel and ſuperior to the vulgar, merely by ſuch eaſy means as the omiſſion of decent and reaſonable ceremonies. I ſuppoſe they mean to claim the merit of being ſuperior to prejudice; but I think they are under a very ſilly prejudice when they think themſelves wiſe enough to be juſtified in contradicting the common ſenſe and common practice of mankind; and when they ſuppoſe ſingularity alone can give them merit, and cauſe them juſtly to plume themſelves on conſcious ſuperiority.

Obſerve at table that fine lady, and fine gentleman by her ſide. How they lift their eyebrows, and ſmile with ineffable contempt. Heavens! has there been any moral turpitude, or any groſs violation of decency committed? None. But, you muſt know, that yonder gentleman, who is juſt arrived from the country, where he has reſided for a long time, drank to the lady in ſmall beer, and ſtood up to ſay grace, and to make a bow to the maſter of the houſe. He might have ſworn profanely, talked indecently, or drank intemperately, and if he had but the cant of faſhion, they who now deſpiſe him would have admired and careſſed him as a *good man*.

CHAP. V.

Of trifling Amuſements as the Reſource of old Age.

IT ſeems to be a natural concluſion from the ſhortneſs of life, that none of it ſhould be thrown away; and it is therefore thought wonderful that there ſhould be many contrivances to abbreviate the duration of what is confeſſed already to be too much circumſcribed. Now paſtimes of all kinds are conſidered as contrivances to wear away time without reflection, and are therefore cenſured by ſevere philoſophy, as arguing abſurdity in man, who is forever lamenting the brevity of his exiſtence. But, as man is conſtituted, it muſt be denied that the time ſpent in amuſement is always thrown away; and, perhaps, it will be found to lengthen rather than to abbreviate our duration.

It contributes, when under the reſtraint of moderation, to confirm health and exhilarate the ſpirits; both which effects not only become cauſes of long life, but alſo enable a man to act with vigour and efficacy in the employments of a profeſſion, and in the common duties of ſociety. It not only renders life more comfortable, but more uſeful.

It is, however, true, that in the vigorous ſeaſons of youth and health, ſome ſerious and momentous employment ſhould be engaged in, which may ſerve ſociety, advance the intereſts of a family, or elevate the meritorious individual in the ranks of civil life.

But in old age, when theſe ends ſhall have been accompliſhed, and * infirmities begin to encreaſe, the active mind will ſtill require an object, and the object ought to be of ſuch a kind as agitates moderately, not like the ſtorm, but like the gentle breeze of a fine ſummer evening.

Hobby-horſes are very deſirable at all ages; but neceſſary in old age, when the ſources of amuſement begin to fail. It was this which induced the ſenſible and experienced Geron to keep an aviary. He had relinquiſhed a buſy life, and retired from London to a little country town, where, though there was an agreeable neighbourhood, there were few diverſions but thoſe of cards; which, notwithſtanding he liked them very well, could not occupy all his time and attention. They are chiefly a winter and an

* Solve ſeneſcentem maturè ſanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus et ilia ducat.
HOR.

evening

evening amuſement, and he wanted ſomething, beſides reading, for the ſummer and for his mornings. He therefore built a little room in his garden, and fitted it up with admirable contrivance as an aviary. The building of it, the conveniences, and the improvements, which he was continually adding, cauſed him much pleaſure: and it ſoon became an object of high ambition to breed the moſt beautiful Canary birds. He ſucceeded in his attempts, and more than once carried the prize given by a ſociety of bird-fanciers for producing a bird of the fineſt plumage. He taught many bulfinches to pipe a tune, and made them preſents to his friends as inſtances of ſingular favor. He reared nightingales from the neſt, and attended them with all a parent's ſolicitude. The delicate, the elegant woodlark was one of his firſt favourites, and he liſtened with freſh delight when his birds warbled their morning melody, which he fancifully conſidered as ſongs of gratitude and love to himſelf in return for protection.

But that he might ſecure variety, which is neceſſary to add a zeſt to amuſement, he has added ſeveral other hobby-horſes to this his firſt favourite. He has acquired a taſte for tulips, and prides himſelf on making a more beautiful diſplay of this gaudy flower in the month of

May than any floriſt in his vicinity. I called it a gaudy flower; but I ſpeak like an inelegant ſpectator when I uſe a contemptuous epithet in mentioning it: for, though to a common eye a bed of tulips preſents only a glare of vivid colours, to a connoiſſeur it exhibits peculiar elegance as well as finery. Geron views them with the affection and complacency of a lover.

The garden affords him many ſources of amuſement. He attends not indeed to the olitory, and his ſtrength will not permit him to take an active part in the labours of horticulture. But he has a ſmall green-houſe, to every part of which he gives a daily attention; and its various beauty amply repays him, as indeed nothing is more grateful, in return for care and labour, than the vegetable world.

To add to his amuſements, he has ſtocked a fiſh-pond in a meadow adjoining to his little garden; and, inſtead of taking out all the fiſh at once, by emptying the pond or drawing it, which is the uſual practice of country gentlemen, he makes a rule that no fiſh ſhall be caught out of it but by angling, which he thinks the only fair method of fiſhing among thoſe who fiſh for diverſion. His ſtrength will not permit him to follow the piſcatory ſport in the river, as he

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can neither ſtand long, nor walk a great way; and he has the ſenſe, wherever he cannot accommodate the nature of the diverſion to himſelf, to ſubmit himſelf to the nature of the diverſion.

He has many little amuſements in the houſe, as well as in the aviary, the garden, and canal. As he is properly diſpoſed in religious matters, the reading of the Scriptures, with a comment, and of pious books of the beſt characters, fills up both agreeably and uſefully an hour or two every day; but more eſpecially when the weather is rainy, or in any reſpect inclement.

Viſits, and cards in moderation, contribute to enliven his time in an agreeable viciſſitude; and the conſequence of his wiſe diſtribution of his leiſure hours, he enjoys a chearfulneſs which contributes, perhaps, more than any thing elſe, to health and longevity.

His neighbour Bibo ridicules his amuſements as trifling and puerile. Bibo is nearly as old as Geron; but he is not yet free from youthful vanity. He is an old beau, ſportſman, gameſter, and bottle companion; but his infirmities often prevent him from acting in theſe characters; and when on a good day (as he calls it,

whenever he is tolerably well) he attempts them, he never acquits himſelf to his own ſatisfaction. Old age, and the depredations of time, are his great complaint. He has no reſource in himſelf, and cultivates no taſte for domeſtic and harmleſs diverſions. He mopes over the fire in the morning, and the bottle in the afternoon. Melancholy and bodily diſeaſe, encreaſed by indolence and exceſs, accelerate the evils, and aggravate the pains of age.

How happy would Bibo have been if he had condeſcended to give up the gravity of the gameſter, and the affectation of the beau, and adopted a taſte for ſome innocent hobby-horſe, which he now deſpiſes as too childiſh and unimportant to deſerve his notice.

CHAP. VI.

Of the little Arts practiſed to gain the Appearance of Conſequence at public Places, &c.

SUCH is the natural pride of the human heart, that there is ſcarcely any trifling diſtinction which can attract notice that will not be purſued with eagerneſs, and fill the poſſeſſor's boſom with ſelf-eſteem.

One of the eaſieſt, and therefore the commoneſt method of drawing attention by trifles, is that of talking loud at all places of public reſort. There is ſomething ſo ſpirited in it, ſo charmingly careleſs, and it gives ſuch an air of ſuperiority, by ſeeming to deſpiſe all the hearers as if they were no more than ſtocks and ſtones, that it ſeldom fails of exciting not only notice, but ſome degree of admiration.

I have heard many a fine gentleman and lady, while they were ſtrutting up and down a crowded walk, queſtion each other on the laſt night's ball, or their engagements to dinner, in a voice ſo loud as ſilenced the reſt of the company, and cauſed a general hum of enquiry, Who are theſe? Thus the end was anſwered. The ſpec-

tators were aweſtruck and brow-beaten, and the happy pair marched off in triumph, like a king and queen of Brentford, till the next morning, when they returned to make new conqueſts. From their volubility and vehement loudneſs, they acquired, among many ſilly liſteners, the character of people of infinite ſenſe and ſpirit.

Another method of gaining notice and admiration, is to ſwear and ſwagger at inns, or at any other place where we are among our inferiors, or are unknown. It is, to be ſure, wonderful to obſerve how reſpectful a reception he meets with who, with a cockade in his hat, which is alſo judiciouſly cocked over his eye, with a ſtick in his hand, and an oath in his mouth, enters an inn and calls about him with a voice like that of the men who cry peas and beans in the ſtreets of London. There have been generals, admirals, colonels, and captains, who never appeared ſo formidable, and diſplayed ſo much proweſs, as in ſtorming an inn in a country town. And the petty gentry, who imitate ſuch heroes, conſider themſelves as perſonages of great conſequence when they break the bell wire by the violence of their ringing, frighten the landlady with their fierce looks, ſend the waiters ſcampering like men beſide themſelves, and, with their oaths, ſet

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the whole houſe, yards, and ſtables in an uproar.

Knocking vehemently at a door, eſpecially if it be done according to the lateſt method invented by people of faſhion in the ſquares, adds very conſiderably to perſonal importance.

Singularity in dreſs is one of the commoneſt modes of ſeeking diſtinction; but by ſingularity I do not mean a deviation from the eſtabliſhed faſhion, but an obedience to it carried to an extreme. An enormous pair of buckles has given many a young man a degree of confidence which no learning or virtue which he poſſeſſed could ever have ſupplied. A hat, a coat, a ſhoe, of a ſhape, or ſize, or colour, exceeding the ordinary bounds, have fixed the eyes of a whole aſſembly, and gratified the ambitious wearer with the moſt heartfelt ſatisfaction.

Some, rather than not be noticed at all, will endeavour to draw the eyes of their fellow creatures upon them by ſuch profuſion and expences, as cauſe an execution in their houſes, and force them to elope. Hunted by bailiffs and creditors, it is ſtill ſome conſolation to them that they are the reigning topic. Vices are often practiſed with a deſire of being rendered remarkable;

and many plume themſelves as perſons of the firſt conſequence, if their profligacy cauſes them to become the ſubjects of paragraphs in a newſpaper.

Vanity indeed operates with ſo violent a force on ſome minds, that it ſeems to contradict itſelf, and defeat its own purpoſe; for, in purſuit of notice and diſtinction, it will even induſtriouſly ſeek contempt.

As the deſire of fame or diſtinction ſeems natural in man, I contend not againſt it; but I wiſh it to operate in urging to acts of ſingular beneficence and ſocial utility, rather than ſpend its force in trifles, follies, vanities, and vices.

Of the greater part of theſe ambitious perſons whom I have juſt deſcribed, it may, I believe, be ſaid that they would act wiſely to avoid, inſtead of ſeeking diſtinction, for they ſeem to be of that character to which the emphatical words of an elegant political writer may moſt juſtly be applied—"a character which will only paſs without cenſure, when it paſſes without obſervation."

If men find themſelves inſenſibly impelled by the ambition of their nature to ſeek diſtinction, let

let them learn to ſeek it by arts and virtues which embelliſh life, and diffuſe happineſs or convenience through the ranks of ſociety. If they cannot do this, let them contentedly acquieſce in an innocent obſcurity.

CHAP. VII.

Of making a ſplendid Appearance for the Sake of obtaining Succeſs in a Trade or Profeſſion.

———Purpura vendet
Caufidicum; vendunt amethyſtina. Juv.

IN the eye of reaſon there is certainly no neceſſary connexion between oſtentation and excellence. Can the keeping of a chariot be a proof of pre-eminence of knowledge? Certainly not. But ſuch is the world, that the phyſician on foot ſtands no chance of being employed if his rival rides in his chariot.

The preference of the medical profeſſor who makes a faſhionable appearance to him that does not, has been always remarkable; ſo much ſo, that it is almoſt a proverbial queſtion, What is a doctor without his chariot? Formerly large wigs, gold headed canes, full trimmed coats, and ſolemn looks, were conſidered as natural ſigns of profound knowledge. They indeed are voluntarily laid aſide by the gentlemen themſelves; who ſeem to think it no diſadvantage to appear young in perſon, and eaſy in manners. But ſtill the appearance of faſhionable life, of ſervants and equipage,

equipage, is a very powerful recommendation to favour.

The ſame unreaſonable aſſociation of the idea of ſuperior excellence, wherever a ſplendid appearance is made, ſeems viſible in almoſt every other art, trade, and profeſſion.

And this it is which forms one of the moſt frequent excuſes, in young perſons, for launching out, as they call it, or living beyond their income.

In the lower orders of mercantile life, a young man begins trade with his little patrimony, or with the gift of a living parent, who, perhaps, diſtreſſes himſelf to raiſe a ſum which, though moderate, might, under proper management, grow, like a handful of ſeed, to a large quantity. A ſhop, or rather a *warehouſe* (for, as Juvenal ſays,

——————hic vivimus ambitioſa
Paupertate omnes——————

and every thing muſt now have a magnificent name), is hired at a conſiderable rent. It muſt, in the firſt place, be fitted up not only neatly and conveniently (for neatneſs and convenience are mean ideas), but elegantly, and in the neweſt taſte.

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The door poſts are adorned with ſculpture, and the name and trade exhibited on a tablet adorned with a profuſion of gilding and paint. The counters, the drawers, the ſhelves, are mahogany; and the maſter and miſtreſs are every day attired by the moſt faſhionable hair-dreſſer, and deſcend (which is but rarely) from the ſumptuous dining-room to ſtand behind the counter, juſt as if they were going into a drawing-room, or the preſence chamber.

Connections are ſought with the utmoſt diligence. To promote them, viſits are paid and received with all the formality of faſhion. The glaſs in the dining-room is ſtuck round with gilt cards of invitation to dinners, ſuppers, balls, and aſſemblies.

Well; all this is very pleaſing; but how goes on buſineſs in the ſhop,—in the warehouſe? I beg pardon. O, the ſcrubs mind that. Mr. and Mrs. Diaper are too much engaged in dreſſing in the morning and viſiting in the afternoon to mind the ſubordinate buſineſs of the ſhop. The clerk, the journeyman, the apprentice, and the porter are hired purpoſely for that buſineſs; but let Mr. and Mrs. Diaper alone; they know what they are about, they are promoting trade, by making connexions and *cutting a figure.*

a figure. There is no ſucceeding in the preſent days without cutting a figure.

But the misfortune is, every one is *cutting a figure* to the utmoſt extent of their pecuniary abilities; and the connexions which Mr. and Mrs. Diaper make are themſelves making connexions for the ſake of advancing their intereſt. None of them have a fund ſufficient to ſupport the expences of the faſhionable life which they affect; and, in the courſe of a few years, they all, in their turn, *cut a figure* in the London Gazette.

But in higher life, in profeſſions and employments which might juſtly claim a right to genteel life, it is uſual to go beyond the line of moderation and propriety, with the deluſive idea that the greater figure a man makes in the external circumſtances of a fine houſe, a luxurious table, a ſplendid equipage, a tribe of ſervants, the more likely he is to ſucceed, and to be aggrandized. In the mean time he himſelf is ſapping the foundation of his own greatneſs, and the viſionary fabric ſoon falls to riſe no more.

Theſe ambitious perſons, who hope to raiſe themſelves by affecting a rank they cannot ſupport, are well deſcribed in the celebrated fable of the

the frog and the ox. They and their families, after a ſhort ſtruggle, become ridiculous and pitiable. But the misfortune is not confined to themſelves; for though their magnificent appearance gained no credit with their ſuperiors, yet it cauſed them to be truſted by their inferiors, by poor tradeſmen, who ſupplied them with many articles both neceſſary and ſuperfluous, in the hope of ſerving themſelves and feeding their families. Theſe are uſually great ſufferers; for being poor and of little conſequence, they ſtand the worſt chance of having their demands ſatisfied. The debts of honour, and the expences of faſhion, muſt firſt be paid; but the butcher, the baker, and the brewer may come in perhaps for ſixpence in the pound, when their cuſtomers are gone abroad to live genteelly at Liſle or Bruſſells.

To make that appearance which our rank requires, provided our purſe can pay the expences, argues a proper ſpirit. But it is ſurely folly, as well as wrong and robbery, in purſuit of a phantom, to expend on luxury and vanity, the property of thoſe who, in the courſe of their honeſt callings, have given us confidence, and entruſted us with what was neceſſary to our ſubſiſtence, or what we conſidered as conducive to our proſperity.

Children

Children brought up to expences and habits which they cannot ſupport, often rue the folly of parents, who, catching at the ſhadow of honour or wealth, let go the ſubſtance, their own happy and independent competency.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Impudence as a Recommendation of Boys, and a Proof of Parts in them.

I WAS once viſiting in a family at Chriſtmas, when the eldeſt ſon, a fine boy about twelve years old, came home from ſchool for the holidays. As he entered the parlour, which was full of company, inſtead of paying his compliments to them with the eaſe and ſufficiency of a maſter of the ceremonies, he hung down his head, bluſhed violently, and ſeemed loſt in confuſion.

Good God! exclaimed his mother, I ſhall never be able to endure this. Is this the education of Dr. ——'s ſchool. I do inſiſt upon it, my dear, turning to her huſband, that Henry ſhall go no more to a ſchool where, after three years, he has not learned how to make his *entree* into a room with tolerable decency! What will become of my poor child! I ſhall be aſhamed of him—a diſgrace, a downright diſgrace to the family!

The boy's confuſion, it may readily be conceived, was not diminiſhed by this paſſionate and

and unmotherly reception. He burſt into tears, and was immediately ordered to leave the room. After a few remarks on the awkwardneſs of ſchoolboys, the company ſat down to whiſt, and poor Henry was ſent to bed.

I had an opportunity very ſoon after of enquiring into the character of the boy, and I found, that ſo far from being ſtupid, as ſuppoſed by his mother, he was the very beſt ſcholar in his claſs, and had already written one or two pretty copies of verſes on the Spring.

As I am as fond of making experiments in morals as a natural philoſopher is in pneumatics, hydroſtatics, or chemiſtry, I determined to watch the progreſs of the boy, and to ſee whether he was likely to become, as his relations haſtily concluded, an awkward and ſtupid man. I found he continued to improve in every accompliſhment at his ſchool, for his removal from it was overruled by the advice of a ſenſible clergyman, who had great influence in the family. He went to the univerſity with a great character, which he ſupported, and is now a very polite gentleman, an excellent ſcholar, and a moſt reſpectable man.

This event led me to lament the prevalence of an idea, that modeſty, diffidence, or baſhfulneſs

neſs in boys is a ſign of ſtupidity, and on all accounts ought to be removed as ſoon as poſſible.

The fineſt roſe that ever exhaled fragrance and expanded beauty was once a roſe-bud; and had the roſe-bud been torn open with violence in its ſtate of immaturity, would it have ever become a beautiful and perfect flower?

Nature, in a ſtate of imperfection, is not aſhamed of bluſhing. She is conſcious of her imbecillity, and is not afraid to own her diffidence; and while ſhe labours to ſupply her defects, conceives none to be diſgraceful that are unavoidable.

Prudence ſuggeſts the caution, that we ſhould beware of diſturbing nature in her own proceſs, which was undoubtedly preſcribed by the God of nature.

That fine ſenſibility which cauſes an efflorescence in the check of the ſchoolboy is, I think, a favourable preſage of every thing amiable.

That early ripeneſs which diſplays a manlineſs of behaviour at the infantine age, is like every thing premature, of ſhort continuance, and of little ſolidity.

But faſhionable parents are diſguſted with manners in their children diſſimilar to their own. They are all eaſe and familiarity. As to diffidence and bluſhing, ſome of them had rather be convicted of an atrocious crime. But their children bluſh and appear aukward in a circle of polite company, that is, of company formed upon the model which happens to be the reigning taſte among the rich and idle. Take the boy from his books and from his maſters, if he is thus aukward; for there is no tolerating ſuch an unlicked cub in one's preſence.

Have patience, Madam, I would take the liberty of ſaying, the bud will expand in due time, and fruit will appear; but if you touch the bloom, in order to force it open before its time, it is very likely that you deſtroy the poſſibility of fruit.

Diffidence wears off when the mind becomes conſcious of a ſufficient degree of ſtrength to ſupport confidence. With reſpect to confidence without merit to ſupport it, though often valued in the world, and particularly in the law, I hold it in great diſhonour. It may puſh its way to employment and opulence, but it is ſcarcely conſiſtent with a good mind, and without a good

mind

mind what happineſs is to be found in employment and opulence.

Sincerum eſt niſi vas quodcunque infundis aceſcit.
HOR.

People who value themſelves on knowing the world are very apt to inſiſt on effrontery as a neceſſary virtue to go through the world with ſucceſs, or rather to recommend it as the ſubſtitute and ſuccedaneum of every virtue. But I never hear theſe perſons boaſting of their knowledge of the world, and the value of worldly wiſdom, but I think of ſome paſſages in Scripture in which it is not held in ſo high eſtimation—*The children of this world are wiſer in their generation than the children of light*; but it ſhould be remembered, that the wiſdom is not that which is from above, but that of the ſerpent, that of the accurſed ſpirits, originating and terminating in evil under the fair ſemblance of good.

CHAP. IX.

On Genius for Converſation being diſtinct from a Genius for Compoſition.

I HAVE known men remarkably lively and well informed in converſation appear to great diſadvantage on committing their thoughts to paper, and others who wrote learnedly, elegantly, politely, and acutely, ſo dull, and apparently ſo weak in converſation, as to be conſidered as very unpleaſant and uninſtructive companions. And I have obſerved this ſo often, as to be led to think, what may appear paradoxical, that a genius for writing and a genius for talking are different in their nature.

It appears to me that ſuperficial men talk moſt fluently, and, in mixed companies, moſt agreeably. They are uſually gay and cheerful, for their ſpirits are not exhauſted by deep thought, nor drawn from the things before them by abſence. But gaiety and cheerfulneſs will give them, in the convivial hour, a charm which the profound ſcholar, who utters his thoughts with gravity and heſitation, can never diſplay.

A man of a ſuperficial mind and little genius has no diffidence ariſing from thoſe delicacies

and ſenſibilities which often cruelly diſtreſs the really ingenious. What he thinks, or has read, or heard, he utters with the confidence of an oracle; ignorant of objections, and fearleſs of miſtake. His confidence gives him credit. The company is always diſpoſed to liſten with attention when any man ſpeaks with the aſſurance of undoubting conviction. Attention gives him additional ſpirits, and he begins to enjoy the greateſt ſhare of converſation as his right, and at length overpowers with volubility and emphaſis the ſilent or gentle diffidence of modeſt merit.

Ignorant and ſuperficial admirers, finding a voluble ſpeaker juſt calculated for the meridian of their underſtandings, are highly delighted with him as a companion, and cry him up as a prodigy of parts and abilities.

Their voices uniting in his favour procure him, perhaps, ſome profeſſional or official employment in which compoſition may be neceſſary. He writes; and the wonder is no more. How are the mighty fallen! *Quantum mutatus!*

Applauded in the circles of a tavern club, he ventures to publiſh. A fatal venture! for he who appeared, in converſation, a giant, becomes, when approached in the cloſet, a pigmy or Lilliputian.

I wiſh

I wiſh to prevent miſtakes, by preventing the haſty formation of an idea of a man's intellectual talents or genius ſolely from his pleaſantneſs or vivacity as a companion. Conſtant experience proves it to be a fallacious criterion. Men of great thought, ſolid judgment, and well-digeſted learning, are able indeed to ſpeak to great advantage on great occaſions; but they are not ſufficiently intereſted in trifling or ordinary company; and without pride, or any intention to ſlight, naturally retreat from nonſenſe and levity to the pleaſant indulgence of their own contemplation; therefore they ſay but little, and that little often from civility rather than becauſe they are ſtruck with what paſſes, or impelled to ſpeak by the intereſting nature of the queſtion, or the manner in which it is diſcuſſed. In the mean time a feather will tickle and excite a fool.

It is wrong therefore, I conclude, to form a deciſive opinion of a man's profeſſional abilities from what appears in common converſation. The only true criterion is the exerciſe of thoſe abilities in ſome act of the profeſſion. Judge of the companion in company; but of the lawyer's abilities at the bar, or from his written opinion; of the clergyman's from the pulpit, or the preſs; of the phyſician's from the repeated ſucceſs of ac-

tual practice; judge of the merchant from his punctuality and payments, from his behaviour and appearance at the Royal Exchange, and not from his volubility at the King's Arms or the London, nor even on the huſtings and in the council-chamber of Guildhall.

It is an erroneous judgment which is often formed of children as well as men, when thoſe are ſuppoſed to have the beſt parts who talk moſt. Exceſſive garrulity is certainly incompatible with ſolid thinking, and is the mark of that volatile and ſuperficial turn, which, dwelling upon the ſurfaces of things, never penetrates deeply enough to make any valuable diſcoveries. But as no rule is without exceptions, ſome great thinkers, it muſt be confeſſed, have been alſo great talkers.

No one man can unite in himſelf every excellence. He who excels as a pleaſant and lively companion may be deficient in judgment, in accuracy, in a power of attention and labour; and he who excels in theſe may want the verſatility, the gaiety, the cheerfulneſs, which are neceſſary to render the communication of ideas in a mixed ſociety agreeable. Men aſſociate in the convivial hour of leiſure from their profeſſional or commercial

commercial employment, more for the ſake of paſſing their time with eaſe, and even mirth, than of being improved or leſſoned by the ſage remarks of grave philoſophy.

Addiſon, who could write ſo agreeably on all ſubjects, was not an entertaining companion unleſs the circle was ſelect. Samuel Johnſon loved company becauſe he found himſelf attended to in it as an oracle of taſte and wiſdom, but he could not be ſaid to poſſeſs companionable *agrément*. His character enſured him reſpect previouſly to his ſpeaking, and what he ſaid juſtified it; for it was original and ſolid; his authoritative tone and manner compelled acquieſcence, even if conviction was not produced; but, after all, he was not what the world calls a pleaſant companion. I could mention ſome of his contemporaries of far inferior merit, and more circumſcribed reputation, who diffuſed joy and information wherever they went, and were beloved at the ſame time that they were admired. They alſo have written books; but their books are not to be compared to Johnſon's. Their books were forgotten or deſpiſed, even while their converſation was ſought and enjoyed by all ranks of people.

But as univerſal excellence is deſirable, it ſeems right that men ſhould labour to ſupply

every defect, and therefore I wish that writers would cultivate the art and habit of conversation, and converſers on the other hand endeavour to obtain the ſolidity and accuracy of writers; and thus the advantage derived to hearers and readers will be augmented.

CHAP. X.

The Hill of Life. A Viſion.

A GENTLE aſcent led to a lofty eminence, and on the ſummit was a level plain, of no great extent. The boundaries of it could not indeed eaſily be aſcertained; for as the aſcent on one ſide was eaſy and gradual, ſo the ſlope on the other continued almoſt imperceptible, till it terminated at once in abrupt declivity.

At the firſt entrance of the hill, I obſerved great numbers of infants crawling on beds of primroſes, or ſleeping on pillows formed by the moſs. They frequently ſmiled, and their ſweet countenances ſeemed to expreſs a complacency and joy in the conſciouſneſs of their new exiſtence. Many indeed wept and wailed, but their ſorrow, though pungent, was ſhort, and the ſight of a pretty leaf or flower would cauſe a ſmile in the midſt of their tears; ſo that nothing was more common than to ſee two drops trickling down cheeks which were dimpled with ſmiles. I was ſo delighted with the ſcenes of innocence, that I felt an impulſe to go and play with the little tribe, when juſt as I was advancing, I felt a wand ſtrike my ſhoulder, and turning my eyes

on one ſide, I beheld a venerable figure, with a white beard, and in a grey mantle elegantly thrown round him.

"My ſon, ſaid he, I ſee your curioſity is raiſed, and I will gratify it; but you muſt not move from this place, which is the moſt advantageous ſpot for the contemplation of the ſcene before you.

"Yon hill is the Hill of Life, a pageant which I have raiſed by the magic influence of this wand, to amuſe you with an inſtructive picture.

"The beauteous innocents whom you ſee at the foot of the hill preſent you with the idea of angels and cherubs, and of ſuch indeed is the kingdom of Heaven. Simplicity and innocence are their amiable qualities, and the more of them they retain in their aſcent, the happier and lovelier ſhall they be during the whole of their journey.

"But raiſe your eyes a little ſpace. You ſee a lively train intent to learn, under the ſage inſtructors who accompany them, the eaſieſt and ſafeſt way of aſcending and deſcending the hill which lies before them. They often run from the ſide of their guides, and loſe themſelves

among the ſhrubs that bloſſom around them. Some give no ear to inſtruction, and conſequently are continually deviating among thorns, thiſtles, nettles, and brambles. Their errors are at preſent retrievable, and few fall in the pitfalls with which the hill abounds. Joy illuminates their countenances. Theirs are the ruddy cheek, the ſparkling eye, lively ſpirits, and unwearied activity. They retain a great ſhare of the innocence with which they ſet out, and therefore they are cheerful. Enviable age, if reaſon were mature! But folly, wantonneſs, frowardneſs of temper, and ignorance, greatly interrupt and ſpoil their enjoyments. Fruits of delicious taſte grow around them, and flowrets of the ſweeteſt ſcent and moſt beautiful colour ſpring beneath their feet. But they ſoon grow tired of this lower part of the hill, and ambitiouſly aſpire at higher eminences.

"Behold them a few paces higher. They advance with eagerneſs, and many of them forſake the guides which have conducted them thus far in their aſcent. They haſten in their courſe, nor do they adhere to the direct road, but deviate without ſcruple. Some indeed return, but the greater part climb the hill by paths of their own choice, full of difficulty and danger. The pitfalls which are placed in every part of the hill are in this part very numerous,

and not eaſily to be avoided by thoſe who forſake the high road. There are indeed no parts of the hill in which a guide is more neceſſary than here; nor any in which the travellers are leſs inclined to ſeek his aſſiſtance.

"You ſee the beauty of the bloſſoms. You hear the muſic of the birds. All nature ſeems to conſpire in affording delight; but too many of the travellers preſerve not that innocence and ſimplicity which are neceſſary to give a taſte for the pleaſures which are allowed. Inſtead of plucking the flowers which are known to be ſafe and ſalutary, they deſire none but ſuch as are poiſonous. The aſpiring nature of the travellers leads them to continue the aſcent, and by this time you ſee they have reached the level ſummit, where you obſerve a prodigious crowd, all buſy in purſuit of their ſeveral objects. Their faces are clouded with care, and in the ardour of purſuit they neglect thoſe pleaſures which lie before them. Moſt of them have now loſt a great ſhare of their original innocence and ſimplicity, and many of them have loſt it entirely.

"And now they begin to deſcend. Their cheerfulneſs and alacrity are greatly abated. Many limp, and ſome already crawl. The numbers diminiſh almoſt every ſtep; for the pitfalls are multiplied

multiplied on this ſide of the hill, and many of the travellers have neither ſtrength nor ſagacity to avoid them. Many delightful ſcenes remain. Fruit in great abundance grows around them. But the greater part, you may remark, are careleſs of the obvious and natural pleaſures which they might reach and enjoy, and are eagerly digging in the earth for yellow duſt, on which they have placed an imaginary value. Behold one who has juſt procured a load of it, under which he is ready to ſink. He totters along in haſte to find a hiding-place for it; but before he has found it, himſelf is hidden from our eyes, for lo! while I ſpeak, he is dropping into a pitfall. Moſt of his companions will follow him; but you ſee no one is alarmed by the example. The deſcent is become very ſteep and abrupt, and few there are who will reach the bottom of the hill. Of thoſe few not one advances without ſtumbling on the edge of the pitfalls, from which he can ſcarcely recover his feeble foot. Ah! while I ſpeak, they are all gone."

And is this a picture of life? ſaid I; alas! how little do they ſeem to enjoy it? Surely, ſome error muſt infatuate them all. O ſay, that I may avoid it, and be happy.

"My ſon, ſaid my benevolent guide, do not haſtily form an opinion derogatory from the value of life. It is a glorious opportunity afforded by the Creator for the acquiſition of happineſs. Caſt your eyes on yonder plain, which lies at the bottom of the hill, and behold the horizon."

I looked, and behold a cloud tinged with purple and gold, parted in the centre, and diſplayed a ſcene at which my eyes were dazzled. I cloſed them awhile, to recover the power of viſion, and when I opened them, I ſaw a figure in which majeſty and benevolence were awfully united. He ſat on a throne with every appearance of triumph, and at his feet lay a croſs. And I heard a voice ſaying, "Come again, ye children of men." And lo, the plain opened in more places than I could number, and myriads of myriads ſtarted into exiſtence, with bodies beautiful and glorious. And the voice proceeded, "In my Father's houſe are many manſions. Ye have all fallen ſhort of the perfection for which ye were created; but ſome have been leſs unprofitable ſervants than others, and to them are allotted the more exalted places of bliſs; but there remain manſions appropriated to all the ſons of men. I have redeemed the very worſt of them from the tyranny of death. Riſe therefore to your reſpective manſions.

Enter

Enter into the joy of the Lord." He ſaid, when the ſound of inſtruments ſweeter than the unpurged ear ever heard, rang throughout heaven's concave. And the glorified bodies beneath roſe like the ſun in the eaſt, and took their places in the ſeveral planets which form what is called our ſolar ſyſtem. I was tranſported with the ſight, and was going to fall on my knees, and ſupplicate to be admitted among the aſpiring ſpirits, when, to my mortification, I thought I was ſuddenly placed on the ſide of the hill, where I had to climb a ſteep aſcent. I wept bitterly, when my guide remonſtrated with me on the unreaſonableneſs of my tears, ſince none were to be admitted to glory who had not travelled the journey which I had ſeen ſo many others travel. "Keep innocence, ſaid he, do juſtice, walk humbly." He ſaid no more, but, preparing to depart, touched me with his rod, and I awoke.

CHAP. XI.

On the prevailing Idea that moderate Learning and Abilities are ſufficient for a Clergyman.

Επιστημη Επιστημων. NAZIANZEN.
Ex quovis Ligno fit Mercurius.

IF there happen to be a boy in a family unlikely, from deficiency of parts, to make his way in the world, he is commonly ſelected by his prudent parents for the church; but the idea that little more is requiſite to form a clergyman than a black coat and a good living, is ſo diſhonourable to the religious eſtabliſhment that I ſhall think myſelf very properly employed in controverting its truth.

I acknowledge that honeſty without learning and abilities is a better qualification for the ſacred profeſſion than learning and abilities without honeſty; but I contend that they are all three indiſpenſibly neceſſary in every one who enters the profeſſion, with ideas ſuperior to thoſe of an enſign when he obtains a pair of colours, or a midſhipman when he procures a commiſſion; or indeed of a tradeſman when he hires a ſhop, or of a mechanic and labourer when they

they undertake a job with no other view than to earn the hire.

If, indeed, a man is awkward and unſkilful in the practice of a mechanical art, few or none employ him, and himſelf alone is the only ſufferer; but it happens in the church, that he who has neither learning nor abilities often has the moſt money, with which himſelf or his friends purchaſe him an eccleſiaſtical employment; and they who are immediately concerned in the manner in which he acquits himſelf in it have it not in their power to eject him for diſability, or to find convenient opportunities of ſupplying his defects by having recourſe to a ſubſtitute. They muſt be contented to be inſtructed by his precept and example; for, however deficient and erroneous, theſe are the beſt they can procure in the legal and regular courſe.

But if the care of a pariſh, and that a very large one, be a moſt important charge, if the moral and ſpiritual ſafety of thouſands may depend on the parſon's exertions, ſurely it is criminal in parents to ſelect the leaſt able and promiſing among their children to fill this office.

But I know it will be urged, and with great appearance of reaſon, that in this age, when printed

printed ſermons abound, it is eaſy to ſelect proper ones without danger of detection, and that if the clergyman reads them and the prayers audibly and diſtinctly in the church, and maintains a decent character out of it, he is a no leſs uſeful and accompliſhed pariſh prieſt than if he had the learning and abilities of a Clarke, a Tillotſon, a Sherlock, a Secker, or a Jortin.

It is very true, that by reading the pious diſcourſes of others properly, he may do much good; but is it likely that he will read them properly if he is unable to write any himſelf, that he will enter into the ſpirit of them, that he will feel and communicate the holy flame of fervent yet rational devotion? And with reſpect to his maintaining a decent character out of church; if he does ſo, he is ſo far to be honoured, but if he is deſtitute of clerical accompliſhments, of a taſte for books, and a love of learning, there is danger that from want of proper and profeſſional employment, he will not maintain that decency of character. Having nothing to do but merely to read in the church, he will be idle, and idleneſs affords many temptations to violate decency of character. Is it not likely that he may commence a beau, a man of faſhion, a man of pleaſure, a gameſter, a drunkard, or a horſe-dealer? When there is no natural turn for the profeſſion

in

in which a man is placed, and no acquired talents to render him pleaſed with himſelf in the exerciſe of it, there is great danger of his having recourſe to ſomething either as an employment or a recreation very foreign to the decency of character which his profeſſion requires him to ſupport.

But, after all, is mere decency of character ſufficient in the teacher of a whole pariſh, in the comforter of the ſick, in the guide to heaven? Decency of character is ſupported by all his more reſpectable pariſhioners, by tradeſmen, by mechanics, by ſervants. Something more is reaſonably expected of him who ſupports the *perſona eccleſiæ*, who was anciently called, as an appellation of reſpect, the PARSON, and who ſtill has the epithet *reverend* * prefixed to his name, as appropriated to his profeſſional character.

He ſhould ſupport a dignity of character as well as a decency. But no artifice, no external pomp will ſupport it. It muſt ſupport itſelf by real ſuperiority. But what ſuperiority is naturally expected as a prime requiſite in a public inſtructor? Is it not ſuperior knowledge of thoſe

* Cui mens divinior atque os
Magna ſonaturum des nominis hujus honorem.
HOR.

things

things in which he undertakes to give inſtruction? But can this ſuperior knowledge be acquired without application? And is it likely that he who was ſelected by his parent for the church becauſe he was A DUNCE ſhould apply at all, or if he ſhould, that he ſhould apply with ſucceſs?

A man who finds himſelf in a profeſſion for which he is conſcious of his being unqualified, feels himſelf uneaſy. He ſeeks refuge in amuſements unbecoming his profeſſion; and I have no doubt but the reaſon why ſo many clergymen are ſeen taking delight in unclerical occupations is, that they are ſelected for a learned profeſſion without any propenſity to learning, and perhaps becauſe they were ſuppoſed to be dull of apprehenſion.

Nothing is more common in the country than to ſee clergymen devoting the greateſt part of their time to hounds and horſes, dreſſing in the extremity of the jockey's or ſportſman's prevailing faſhion, taking the lead or acting as maſters of the ceremonies at aſſemblies, conſpicuouſly active at horſe-races, exceſſively attached to cards and backgammon, and foremoſt in every thing which the more ſerious part of their congregation conſiders as vanity.

They

They may certainly amuſe themſelves with ſeveral of theſe things, and at the ſame time be very worthy men; but yet as theſe things have an appearance of levity, and lead them to aſſociate with looſe and profligate characters, they give offence, and prevent them from doing that good for which alone their profeſſion was inſtituted. No good can be done by a preacher totally deſtitute of authority; but authority is founded on opinion, and nothing, except vice, deſtroys that opinion in religious affairs ſo effectually as the appearance of levity.

I cannot eaſily reſiſt the impulſe which prompts me to inſert a paſſage deſcriptive of a modern curate in the performance of one of the moſt ſolemn parts of his duty, from a well-known poem, entitled The Village. Speaking of a ſick and dying pauper, the poet adds,

But, ere his death, ſome pious doubts ariſe,
Some ſimple fears, which bold, bad men deſpiſe.
Fain would he aſk the pariſh-prieſt to prove
His title certain to the joys above;
For this he ſends the murm'ring nurſe, who calls
The holy ſtranger to theſe diſmal walls;
And doth not he, the pious man appear,
He, "paſſing rich with forty pounds a year?"
Ah no! a ſhepherd of a different ſtock,
And far unlike him feeds this little flock.

A jovial

A jovial youth, who thinks the Sunday's taſk
As much as God or man can fairly aſk;
The reſt he gives to loves and labours light,
To fields the morning, and to feaſts the night;
None better ſkill'd the noiſy pack to guide,
To urge the chace, to cheer them or to chide.
Sure in his ſhot his game he ſeldom miſt,
And ſeldom fail'd to win his game at whiſt.
Then, while ſuch honours bloom around his head,
Shall he ſit ſadly by the ſick man's bed,
To raiſe the hope he feels not, or with zeal
To combat fears that even the pious feel?

Though moderate abilities and moderate attainments, with a good heart, and a decent character, may make a very valuable pariſh-prieſt, yet I can never allow that the ſtudy of divinity, as ſome ſeem to inſinuate, requires only moderate abilities and attainments. It certainly affords ſcope for the greateſt talents, and when intended to be carried to any conſiderable degree of perfection, it requires profound and extenſive erudition.

To be a Chriſtian philoſopher, a phyſician of the ſoul, it is neceſſary to have ſtudied the Holy Scriptures, in the firſt place, with great attention, and in the ſecond, that wonderful microcoſm, the heart of man. As anatomy is neceſſary to the ſurgeon, ſo is the knowledge of the paſſions, the temper, the propenſities, and the alterations which age, proſperity and adverſity, effect

effect in the mind, neceſſary to him whoſe office it is to reduce thoſe who have erred, to afford rational comfort to the afflicted, and hope to the deſperate. To enforce the doctrines of religion he muſt be an orator, he muſt be furniſhed with polite learning, with elegant diction. He muſt have every aſſiſtance which a liberal education can beſtow, and which long and attentive reading can obtain. And ſhall a parent think himſelf juſtified in ſelecting the weakeſt of his children for an office ſo important? He who acts ſo unreaſonably, probably renders the child unhappy, while he inſults the national religion, and that God whom it was eſtabliſhed to honour.

If the parent thinks he perceives in any of his boys a remarkable ſhare of abilities, he reſolves to bring him up to the law, and all his worldly-wiſe friends commend him for not throwing away ſo fine a boy by placing him in the church. I am fully convinced, that no department of the law requires the noble faculties of the mind in ſo great perfection as the paſtoral office. The law chiefly requires AUDACITY AND SOPHISTRY, to both of which the church is greatly ſuperior. The law requires the little wiſdom of this world, the wiſdom of thoſe children of the world who are wiſer in their generation than the children of light; but divinity

towers

towers above ſuch meanneſs, above lawyers and their ſubtleties, above every other profeſſion; for to be a divine, properly and fully accompliſhed, is to be all that philoſophy can give, with the addition of the pureſt and ſublimeſt religion.

It would afford me much ſatisfaction if any thing I can ſay ſhould induce the ſerious Chriſtian to devote the very beſt of his children to the ſervice of the God who gave them, and not impiouſly to conſecrate to the ſervice of the altar him whom, from want of parts, he thinks incapable of any uſeful ſervice. I ſuſpect that man to be inſincere in his profeſſion of Chriſtianity who dares to inſult it ſo groſsly.

It is to be wiſhed that the patronage of livings were chiefly, if not entirely, in the biſhops; for private patronage, in the preſent age and ſyſtem of principles and manners, is highly injurious to the cauſe of Chriſtianity. The biſhops might ſometimes be miſled in conferring benefices, by gratitude to their patrons; but I am ſure they would for the moſt part diſpoſe of the cure of ſouls, far better than eſquires, who conſider the living in their gift as a mere proviſion for ſome lubberly boy who is educated as a fox-hunter; or who, in default of a younger ſon, put it up to ſale, and knock it down with the hammer, like lands, tenements, goods, and chattels.

Nothing

Nothing ſurely conduces to injure Chriſtianity ſo much as a contemptible miniſtry; and it muſt of neceſſity be contemptible, when half the pariſhes in a kingdom can exhibit individuals among the laity more learned and more decent than the parochial prieſt, their authoriſed guide, whom they pay, and whom they ought to revere.

CHAP. XII.

On Etymology.

WHEN one conſiders the great ſagacity of Plato, Varro, and Cicero, one cannot but wonder at their abſurdities in the province of Etymology. The ancients, in general, muſt indeed be eſteemed children, compared to the moderns, in the ſcience of verbal derivation. Few of them appear to have been ambitious of that character of linguiſts which has been one of the firſt objects among modern ſcholars; and when they attempt to give the hiſtory or etymology of words, they often renounce that judgment which has rendered their other efforts of ingenuity invaluable. The Stoics were remarkably abſurd in their etymologies.

I verily believe that their forced and unnatural derivations brought the whole ſcience into diſrepute. Such etymology as the great Cicero's, if I may be pardoned when I ſay it, is for the moſt part truly contemptible; but etymology in the hands of our own countryman Skinner becomes at once an uſeful and certain ſcience. With reſpect to its utility, I am ſure that no man can underſtand technical terms, or even the common

common language of books and elegant converſation, without tracing the meaning of words to the well from which they have flowed through various ſoils and endleſs meanders; often diſcoloured in their channel, and obſcured in their wandering; but at the ſame time ſtill retaining ſomething of the original ſpring, which none can accurately diſtinguiſh, who has not drawn water at the fountain.

Some of the moſt celebrated etymologiſts of antiquity entertained a doubt whether *cælum* might not be derived from *cælo*, to engrave or adorn with ſculpture, becauſe the ſky in the night exhibited the appearance of a work of art, ſtudded with gems, or beautifully engraven with figures. Varro and Cicero ſeem to doubt whether this is not the true derivation, though I think common ſenſe will immediately decide, that the word is derived from *koilon*, a concavity.

Let a modern ſcholar, or man of common ſenſe, judge of Cicero's etymologies in the following inſtances. Saturnus is ſo called *quia ſeſaturat annis*;—Mavors, *quia magna vortit*;—Minerva, *quia minuit, aut quia minatur*;—Venus, *quia venit ad omnia*;—Ceres, *a gerendo fruges*;—Neptunus, *a nando*;—though with this laſt Cicero ſeems diſſatisfied, as he introduces Cotta ridi-

culing Lucilius, for admitting it in argument. *Quoniam*, ſays he, *Neptunum a nando appellatum putas, nullum erit nomen, quod non poſſis una litera explicare, unde ductum ſit, in quo quidem magis tu mihi natare viſus es, quam ipſe Neptunus.*

Moſt of the celebrated etymologiſts have indulged themſelves in far-fetched and fanciful derivation; and this has given ſome occaſion to the facetious to deride the whole ſcience. The famous etymology of the word *hot* has contributed much to diſhonour it; from *calidus*, ſaid the ſcorner, comes *halitus*, from *halitus*, *hatus*, from *hatus*, *hotus*, and from *hotus*, hot. A joke of this kind will frequently injure an eſtimable thing much more than an argument. Perhaps nothing has deterred ſtudents from learning Hebrew ſo much as the famous lines in Hudibras:

> For Hebrew roots are moſtly found
> To flouriſh beſt in barren ground.

There is a conjectural and there is a certain etymology; the former may furniſh innocent and ingenious amuſement; but the latter is really neceſſary to accompliſh not only ſcholars, but artiſts and practitioners in chemiſtry, phyſic, ſurgery, architecture, almoſt all the terms of which are Greek words, very little changed in ſound, though anglicized in orthography.

And

And indeed, in the preſent ſtate of our language, enriched as it is by words from the Greek and Latin, it is not eaſy, if one is utterly unacquainted with etymology, to hold a converſation with well educated perſons, without danger of expoſing ignorance, and committing abſurdities. Much reading of good authors, and much converſe with ſenſible company, will enable a man to gueſs at the meaning of exotic words, with wonderful ſucceſs; but he will yet be inſecure; he will walk on dangerous ground, if he knows not the real original meaning of the expreſſions which he ventures to utter. He muſt loſe much of that pleaſure which ariſes from the confidence of conſcious rectitude, and he muſt often excite the deriſion or the ſilent contempt of his more enlightened aſſociates. If he enters on the ſubject of ſcience, (and who would wiſh to exclude it from converſation?) he will often totter and ſtumble. He will not only err in the meaning, but in the pronunciation, in the length or ſhortneſs of ſyllables, which in many caſes can be determined only by the root. No accuracy of language can be expected, where etymology is unknown.

But beſides its uſe, I think etymology, as a matter of amuſement, well worthy of cultivation. If the collector of ſhells, foſſils and

medals, and the admirer of tulips and birds, is thought to ſpend his time in rational amuſement, why ſhould the curious inveſtigator of words, merely as matters of curioſity, be thought to miſſpend his time in a trifling and uſeleſs occupation? I am of opinion, that though the gratification of his curioſity ſhould be his only object, he will often make diſcoveries, greatly conducive to the advancement of knowledge, and accuracy of language.

I was lately much entertained with looking into a very ingenious little book, written by Meric Caſaubon, *de quatuor linguis*. He employs a great part of it in tracing to the Greek fountain the derivation of old Engliſh words, which come to us through the Saxon channel. Though ſome of his etymologies prove that the warmth of purſuit led him, like many diſcoverers, to ſee the object of it in imagination, when it exiſted not in reality; yet he has collected a great number of words, where the reſemblance of the Engliſh and Greek is ſo ſtriking and complete, as to carry with it the fulleſt conviction of an original conſanguinity.

He quotes a liſt of Greek and Engliſh words from a book ſuppoſed to be written by Camden, and entitled *Paralipomena Anglica*, in which there

there is a very remarkable ſimilarity. I tranſcribe ſome of them in Engliſh characters for the entertainment of the Engliſh reader; *Axine*, an ax; *aſter*, a ſtar; *achos*, ach; *graſtis*, graſs; *elaſſon*, leſs; *era*, earth; *thera*, deer; *thraſus*, raſh; *thura*, a door; *kaleo*, to call; *karabos*, a crab; *klimax*, a climbing; *kreko*, to creek; *kuriake*, a kirk or church; *kuſai*, to kiſs; *lapto*, to lap; *lychnos*, a link; *mene*, the moon; *mule*, a miſt; *neos*, new; *holkas*, a hulk; *holos*, whole; *orchatos*, an orchard; *outhar*, an udder; *pato*, a path; *poterion*, a pot; *polos*, a foal; *rabdos*, a rod; *rakos*, a rag; *ranis*, rain; *rapizein*, to rap; *raſtone*, reſt; *ſkaphe*, a ſhip or ſkiff; *ſkoptein*, to ſcoff; *ſtrophos*, a rope; *ſtronnumi*, to ſtrow; *titthos*, a teat; *phaulos*, foul; *charme*, a ſkirmiſh.

Meric Caſaubon adds a great number of inſtances of his own diſcovery, which ſeem to prove, that many of the Saxon words of our language were derived from the Greek, being firſt curtailed, and duly gothicized, to aſſimilate with northern words; but ſtill retaining enough of the parent's ſhape and features to evince that they are lineally deſcended from Greek families.

I was a good deal diverted with one of his etymologies, and I ſhall introduce it for the en-

tertainment of my readers, without pretending to determine on its propriety:

"*Oikogenes*, domi natus et educatus. Παυυ "σφόδρα οἰκογενὴς apud Platonem, genuinus "Athenienſis, Anglis A COCKNEY; qui in urbe "natus, raro aut nunquam foràs extra natalitia "Pomœria pedem extulit, rerum omnium, pre- "terquàm urbanarum, planè expers et ex merâ "inſolentiâ ſtultus et incredulus admirator."

Fanciful etymology, though very amuſing, is held as a ſcience in no higher eſteem than judicial aſtrology and the interpretation of dreams, which is conducted according to every one's whim or conjecture, without any ſettled rule to determine deciſively.

But there is an etymology which is certain, at leaſt as certain as human knowledge and human affairs are uſually found to be; and to this all languages muſt be greatly indebted for their accuracy. And indeed I am much inclined to believe the general affinity of languages, and to give more credit to conjectural etymology than the ſceptical and ſcornful have uſually allowed it. All men were certainly united in one language for a conſiderable time after their creation; and after the building of Babel there was confeſſedly a confuſion

confuſion or intermixture of the various tongues on the face of the earth; which circumſtance conſtitutes the foundation of conjectural etymology. That confuſion ſtill remains; and it is a very honourable and rational exerciſe of human ingenuity to diſcover the various veins and ſtrata as they lie irregularly diffuſed throughout the mighty maſs of univerſal language. Ridicule has been very improperly thrown both on the ſtudy of antiquities and etymologies. Even the truth of revealed Scripture has received additional confirmation from ſuch etymologiſts as a Bryant, whoſe learned volumes always appeared to me to ſuggeſt ſome ſtriking proofs of revelation derived ſolely from etymology.

CHAP. XIII.

Of a Mode of Puniſhment among the Romans.

SIR,

IT was a part of the ancient military diſcipline among the Romans, to order a delinquent to undergo phlebotomy; and this was originally intended, as Aulus Gellius ſeems to think, rather as a remedy than a puniſhment, *quaſi minus ſani viderentur omnes qui delinquerent*, with an idea, that all who miſbehaved were therefore to be conſidered and treated as invalids or unſound.

I was ſeriouſly conſidering this method adopted by the wiſe Romans, and I could not help thinking that the remedy might be extended to delinquents in modern times in other profeſſions and employments of life as well as in the military.

Suppoſe the caſe of a knowing young man, who is not eaſy till he has picked a quarrel, or diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a nocturnal riot in a college, or in Covent Garden, in the lobbies of the Theatre, or in the rural retreat of Vauxhall, or in a duel in Hyde Park. As his irregularity is uſually attributed to the warmth of his blood, I ſhould think the lancet might be uſed with the greateſt

greateſt probability of ſucceſs. A few ounces quietly let out in the ſurgery, might prevent the effuſion of great quantities by throwing bottles, by the ſtroke of the watchman's ſtaff, or the ſword of ſome antagoniſt equally hot-headed.

It is uſual to call perſons who are too eager in their purſuits *ſanguine*; for ſuch ſurely no cure can be ſo certain and well adapted as phlebotomy.

There is a paſſion which aſſumes the name of love, but inſtead of promoting the happineſs of its object, regards neither its peace or good fame, while it licentiouſly ſeeks its own gratification. It has nothing in it of the tenderneſs, the delicacy, the purity of love, but is very violent, and ſeems, by the ſymptoms, to partake of the nature of a fever. I believe in this caſe copious bleeding, with a cooling regimen, would not fail of effecting at leaſt a temporary cure.

There are numerous tribes of ſchemers, projectors, garreteer politicians, who peſter themſelves and the public with their crudities, but who might be brought to their ſober ſenſes, if the blood which flows in too great quantities to the brain were drawn off by a well-timed and powerful revulſion.

You authors, Sir, excuſe my freedom, often ſtand in great need of phlebotomy. You have a thouſand flights, fancies, and vagaries, which can be attributed to nothing but the irregular tide of your blood. You ſwell with pride and vanity, and think to reform the world from your garrets; but the world goes on as it pleaſes, and you have nothing but your labour for your pains. I think I could lower your pride and vanity by my lancet, and teach you an humility that perhaps you will never learn in the books of philoſophy, and which would ſave you a great deal of needleſs trouble.

In a word, all poets, religious enthuſiaſts, balloniſts, lottery adventurers, ambitious ſtateſmen, and choleric orators in the Britiſh or Iriſh parliament, may, I am convinced, receive great benefit from the phlebotomizing ſyſtem of morality. And I intend ſoon to offer myſelf to the univerſities as a profeſſor of moral phlebotomy. How convenient and expeditious a proceſs will it be! No occaſion for preaching, reading, and contemplating; for whatever diſorder you labour under, only repair to the artiſt who ſhaves for one penny, and bleeds for two, and you may be reſtored to health. Adieu. I ſtop ſhort, leſt you ſhould think I want bleeding myſelf.

Your's, &c.

AN ETHICO CHIRURGICAL OPERATOR.

Though my correſpondent has treated the ſubject ludicrouſly, yet I have little doubt but he meant to convey inſtruction, and I ſhall take occaſion from his letter to recommend bodily temperance as conducive to the government of the paſſions and imagination.

The irregularities of youth are oftener cauſed by exceſs than by that natural ebullition of blood which is often alleged in their excuſe. But allowing as much as can be required to the impulſe of the blood and ſpirits, yet it will be ſtill true, that extravagances of behaviour will probably be much aggravated by intemperance in wine; for indeed, to add the heat of wine to the heat of youth, what is it but to add oil to the fire? Yet at no age do men indulge in wine ſo freely as when, according to their own confeſſion, their blood is already too much inflamed by its natural fermentation. If, inſtead of adding to the flame, young men would manage it with diſcretion, and even damp it ſometimes, it would probably continue to burn with a temperate, yet ſufficient warmth, to extreme old age. But the ardour of youth, raiſed to a fever by wine, not only urges to acts of folly and madneſs, but burns the vital ſtamina which were intended by nature for long duration. I by no means go ſo far as to recommend either phlebotomy or ca-

thartics to a young man who is under the influence of a violent paſſion; but I may venture to ſuggeſt, that he would find the conqueſt over himſelf greatly facilitated by abſtinence from wine, and by moderation in diet. His reaſon might have an opportunity of aſſerting that aſcendency which ſhe ought to claim, and will probably poſſeſs, when the delirium of intemperance is once abated.

The errors of the imagination are very much encreaſed by intemperance. During the fever which it occaſions, man is apt to dream and miſtake his viſions for realities. How many lives have been ſacrificed to ſuppoſed affronts and injuries, to affronts never intended, and injuries never committed. But they appeared in the hour of convivial exceſs, not only as real, but of the greateſt magnitude, and in the moſt ugly colours. If the offended parties would allow themſelves time to cool, and ſpend the next day in abſtinence, or at leaſt in ſtrict temperance, I think the phantom of imagination which appeared like a giant would dwindle to a dwarf, or diſſolve into nothing, like a cloud in the azure expanſe of heaven, which melts into air, and leaves an undiſturbed ſerenity. Temperance would effect what argument would attempt in vain; and ſuch influence has the body over the mind,

that

that there is often no method of reducing the peccant humours of the mind ſo effectual as that of duly arranging the frail manſion in which it is deſtined to dwell. It is a moſt unhappy degradation, when the mind is governed by the body, over which it might, by the exertion of its native powers, exerciſe, for the moſt part, an abſolute dominion.

To cure the mind through the medium of the body is by no means a new proceſs in mental medicine. The faſts, and the mortification of ſelf-denial, which are recommended in the church, were certainly intended to promote ſanctity of life, by purifying the body, which in revelation is honoured ſo far as to be called the Temple of the Holy Spirit. After all our efforts, the humiliating experience of frequent failure muſt convince every ſerious man, that he muſt ſubmit himſelf to the ſupreme phyſician, the phyſician of ſouls, who, if he will, can make us clean; and that he will do ſo, if we aſk as we ought, with ſincere faith and piety, there is every reaſon to hope and believe, from the conſideration of that attribute in which he is known chiefly to delight.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Methodiſm—Cauſes of its Prevalence.

SIR,

I HAVE the misfortune, if I may call it ſuch, to have obtained in my neighbourhood the appellation of a Methodiſt. Whether I deſerve it or not, or if I do, whether there is any diſgrace in it, I muſt leave you to judge, after having heard how the ſtigma came to be fixed upon me.

I live in the country, in a large pariſh, and my houſe is three miles diſtant from the church. The road is always bad, and in winter almoſt impaſſable; the living a very poor one, and the church conſequently ſupplied only once a fortnight. The perſon who ſupplies it is a gentleman, who wears a ſtriped grey coat, white waiſtcoat, leather breeches, belt, and jockey cap, and they ſay he is really a clergyman, though from his appearance I ſhould have ſuppoſed him the ſquire's groom in his Sunday clothes. He reads with the utmoſt rapidity; and indeed I do not wonder at it; for he rides thirty miles on the day, and does duty, as he terms it, in five different churches. His ſermons are but ten minutes long. He allows no pſalm ſinging, to

ſave

ſave time, and his hunter is brought to the church porch the moment he deſcends from the pulpit, and ſo he vaniſhes till that day fortnight.

It may be reaſonably ſuppoſed that his preſence is not much revered, and that his miniſtry is not ſuch as is likely to make proſelytes. The truth is, ſcarcely any attend the church at preſent but the pariſh poor, and two or three ſuperannuated perſons who live cloſe to the church yard. The reſt of the pariſh, which is populous, crowd to a meeting of devout people, who aſſemble twice every Sunday in a little neat building near my houſe, erected for a place of worſhip by voluntary contribution.

I firſt reſorted to this place merely to gratify my curioſity, but, like the rake of antiquity, converted by the philoſopher whom he went to deride, I received ſome impreſſions, for which I hope I ſhall be the better during the whole of my exiſtence. The preacher is a very ſober and moral man, and ſo zealous and earneſt in his prayers and exhortations, that it is impoſſible not to be affected by him. As to peculiar doctrines of divinity, I do not ſwerve from thoſe in which I was educated by my parent, a ſerious clergyman of the Church of England; I only endeavour to imbibe the ſincerity and piety of my paſtor

paſtor and fellow diſciples. I do aſſure you that the decency and fervour of devotion which appears all around me are ſuch as cannot fail of communicating themſelves to all who are within the ſphere of their influence. And then the pſalm ſinging is truly delightful. Upon the whole, I never go to this place but my heart burns within me, and I return full of ſentiments of awful reverence to God, and of good will to man. I am ſure I am no enthuſiaſt. I am ſure I have adopted no tenets inconſiſtent with reaſon and Chriſtianity. I am ſtill a member of the Church of England; but from the want of a fit opportunity of improving myſelf in Chriſtian virtues at the pariſh-church, I have had recourſe to a Methodiſt meeting, againſt which I know there are a thouſand prejudices, but from which I alſo know I have been enabled to advance in faith, hope, and charity.

I own I was prepoſſeſſed in favour of the people who compoſe this congregation from the good which I know they did among the poor, among the very loweſt and moſt abject of mankind, who ſeem to be neglected by ſome as if they were beneath all attention. They give a great deal of money in alms, they employ the women and children in knitting and ſpinning; they have eſtabliſhed two ſchools, one for girls and the other for boys, in which

which many uſeful things are taught, together with the principles of what they call vital religion.

I mean not to ſlight the Church of England; I only lament the unfortunate circumſtances of many pariſhes, which ſeem to render theſe irregular aſſemblies in ſome degree neceſſary for the purpoſes of Chriſtian piety. I do not like to be ſtigmatiſed as a ſectary; but if to do good to all who are in diſtreſs and want, if to endeavour to live up to the pattern of Chriſtian perfection, if this is to be a Methodiſt, I hope God will always give me grace to glory in the appellation, whether my fellow creatures ſhall affix to it the idea of good report or of evil report. Adieu.

ANTONINUS PIUS.

SIR,

I HAVE a complaint to make of an evil, which I believe is at preſent extenſive in its influence, and likely to encreaſe.

I live in a country town which is rather populous. The living is a good one, and the rector reſides upon it, ſupporting his character with great dignity both as a man and as a clergyman.

He

He is an excellent ſcholar, and devotes much of his time to ſtudy, which gives him weight and authority in the minds of his people. He is hoſpitable, and viſits every one; but not without that delicacy and reſerve which he juſtly deems neceſſary to ſupport his importance, an importance which he wiſhes to poſſeſs for no other purpoſe but that of doing good the more effectually.

In the church he is, as he ought to be, a moſt venerable and authoritative teacher. His looks are thoſe of benevolence and wiſdom. His voice firm, loud, and wonderfully expreſſive of devotion. His ſermons are practical and plain, and delivered with authority. He is juſtly beloved by all, except thoſe who are hurt by that excellence which renders their want of it the more conſpicuous, or thoſe who have been ſeduced from his church by arts which are not to be approved.

And this leads me to the ſubject of my complaint. Notwithſtanding his natural endowments, his great learning and acquirements, his exemplary piety and charity, his powers of eloquence, and his indefatigable diligence in the duties of his profeſſion, there has ariſen a ſect in his pariſh which detracts from his character, and by cenſuring

ſuring his doctrine as not ſufficiently evangelical, endeavours to draw away his congregation, and is, in a few inſtances, ſucceſsful. Several rich men of no education, and who are no judges of his exalted character, have ſeceded from the church to a Methodiſt meeting, and, by their example and their intereſt, have drawn many of the poorer people after them.

The preacher at the Methodiſt meeting is an ignorant enthuſiaſt of the loweſt order. He ſcruples not to rail at the church and its miniſters with undiſguiſed virulence. He has ſown the ſeeds of diſſention in a pariſh remarkably well united by love and good neighbourhood, and he has driven ſeveral honeſt labourers to a ſtate of diſtraction bordering on inſanity. Some of the worſt characters as to honeſty, ſobriety, and diligence, are among the warmeſt of his followers; and, inſtead of being improved by his inſtruction, it is remarked, that they have been idler at leaſt ever ſince they have been under this infatuation. Their families have ſuffered want; for they have been ſo much engaged in what they thought heavenly things, as to deem labour for lucre and bodily food a mean and unneceſſary degradation.

The number of Methodiſts in our pariſh is at preſent but ſmall. The reaſon is, that our pre-

ſent rector is ſingularly well qualified to keep his congregation to his church, by his talents, virtues, and reſpectable character; but he is declining in life and in health, and I am greatly afraid that under the conduct of a leſs able or leſs zealous ſucceſſor, the venerable church of our forefathers will be deſerted, and the barn of the mercileſs mechanic, who deals damnation every Sunday to the great delight of his poor infatuated hearers, crowded even till

——rumpant horrea meſſes.

In the mean time I will take the liberty of ſuggeſting to the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church peculiar exertion and vigilance, extraordinary zeal both in the church and out of it, wherever the Methodiſts are likely to gain ground. They ſucceed by dint of vehemence and ardour. They ſeldom have learning or eloquence in tolerable perfection, and therefore if the regular clergy diſplay equal vehemence and ardour, they muſt triumph over them. I am a zealous friend to the church, and cannot ſee without pain the congregations ſtolen away by the ignorant and artful enthuſiaſt. Adieu.

EUSEBIUS.

CHAP. XV.

Of Senſibility as it appears in Piety to God and Benevolence to Man, diſtinguiſhed from that falſe Tenderneſs which is deſcribed in many Novels, and which gives riſe only to Gallantry and Affectation.

THERE ſeems to be a faſhion in virtue as well as in vice. There was a time when learning was the faſhion among the ladies at court, and the hours which are now ſpent by them under the hair-dreſſer, were devoted to the peruſal of Plato in the original language. Chaſtity was once the pride of all who aimed at the character of people of faſhion, and courage, honour, generoſity, gravity, and heroiſm, the ornaments ambitiouſly purſued by courtiers and fine gentlemen.

The quality chiefly affected of late is ſenſibility; and the affectation has been greatly encreaſed, if not introduced by the taſte for novels. The ſentimental comedies, and the affecting tragedies in which love and the diſtreſſes it occaſions when diſappointed, are feelingly deſcribed, have alſo contributed greatly to diffuſe it.

When

When it is genuine, and not increaſed to a degree of weakneſs and effeminacy, it is certainly amiable. True tenderneſs or compaſſion is one of the moſt honourable diſtinctions of human nature. He who cannot feel as a man when an object preſents itſelf naturally formed to affect the human heart, diſplays a diſpoſition not only odious, but ſuch as may lead him to actual and premeditated cruelty.

But while I honour the reality, I muſt deſpiſe the affectation. And there is reaſon to ſuſpect that much of the ſenſibility of which we hear and read, is affected, becauſe it ſeems to operate partially and oſtentatiouſly. It ſeems to diſplay itſelf chiefly in gallantry, and in ſuch acts of pity as are likely to be known, celebrated, and admired in the realms of faſhion. If any lady or lady-like gentleman can find at a watering place a diſtreſs ſimilar to any thing in ſome faſhionable novel, it is ſurpriſing with what pathos it will be deſcribed, and with what aſſiduity relieved; but if a diſtreſs equally afflicting occurs in the obſcure village where the manſion-houſe ſtands, no notice is taken of it, or no more than a regard to common decency requires. The reaſon ſeems to be a fear that the caſe is ſo obſcure that the ſenſibility which alleviates it will never reach the ears

ears of thoſe who tread the paths of faſhionable folly.

And if a groſs paſſion operating in a corrupted heart prompts to an unlawful amour, it is often obeyed by the parties with little ſhame, and with a great deal of complacency and ſelf congratulation, on their being poſſeſſed of ſuch a ſenſibility, which irreſiſtibly tempts them to ſay,

Curſe on all laws ſave thoſe which love has made.

Bad paſſions, and bad actions the conſequence of them, have always been common, and will continue to be ſo in the preſent condition of human nature; but to boaſt of them as doing honour to the heart, under the name of *lovely and delicate ſenſibility*, is peculiar to the faſhionable of the preſent age. Mr. Sterne and Mrs. Draper have too many imitators. A goat is a perſonage of as great ſenſibility and ſentiment as moſt of them.

If the pretenders to extraordinary ſenſibility really poſſeſs it in a degree which renders its fine impulſes utterly irreſiſtible, why does it not appear uniformly, and in other affairs as well as thoſe of love? The Chriſtian religion recommends charity and univerſal benevolence; but the perſons who aim at the epithet faſhionable as the moſt enviable diſtinction of humanity, are by

no

no means equally zealous to obtain the character of good Chriſtians. Many of them, I believe, affect the character of poſſeſſing too much ſenſe to be ſeduced by any thing which they call a popular mode of ſuperſtition. When they are at their ſeats in country villages, and far from the tribe whoſe admiration they ſeek, do theſe perſons of *exquiſite ſenſibility* employ their time in ſeeking objects of compaſſion in the cottages of poverty and miſery, and their money in the diffuſion of comfort? Alas! they too often take the opportunity of practiſing a moſt rigid œconomy at home, to the excluſion of all bounty, that they may have abundance at the next Bath ſeaſon. Charitable ſubſcriptions are indeed very common at Bath, Brighthelmſtone, and Tunbridge, and many are delighted in ſetting down their names, not forgetting their titles; but is there not in the mean time many a poor family pining in want near their houſes and eſtates at home, who never receive any thing from them, becauſe there is no ſubſcription-book, no maſter of the ceremonies, and none of the fraternity of faſhion to obſerve.

Does the ſenſibility to which they pretend in love diſplay itſelf towards their huſbands, wives, children, and in *all the tender charities of private life?* I rather doubt it, becauſe I obſerve that Lady ——, ſo celebrated for ſenſibility, is ſeparated from her huſband, and never ſees her children;

children; becauſe Sir —— never gives a farthing of the fortune he acquired in the Eaſt Indies to his poor relations; becauſe my Lord —— is never at home, where he has a moſt amiable wife who pines in ſolitude, and in vain laments his abſence. Is it neceſſary, to the excitement or gratification of this boaſted ſenſibility, that the object ſhould be unlawful or clandeſtine? If ſo, and experience ſeems to prove it ſo, it can have no pretenſions to praiſe; for it is inconſiſtent with honour and generoſity.

True ſenſibility, equally remote from weakneſs and affectation, will feel the ſentiments of devotion with no leſs vivacity than thoſe of love. It will, I believe, be oftener warmed with an attachment to virtue than to vice. It will be delicate and reſerved, rather than forward, noiſy, and oſtentatious. But has the ſenſibility which is aſſumed at public places, or by the ſlaves of faſhion, any of theſe characteriſtics? Is it not, on the contrary, rather inclined to libertiniſm in religious principle, very far from ſcrupulous in moral conduct, bold, buſy, and conceited? It has indeed every appearance of vanity; and, if there were not danger of confounding it with real ſenſibility, the honour of our nature, it ought to be univerſally exploded with ridicule.

That ſenſibility alone which produces piety to God and benevolence to man has the indiſputable mark of a genuine excellence. Vice and vanity will produce the other ſort, which has every ſign of a counterfeit, and like the baſe coin which, in the hands of the intereſted, is taught to emulate gold, ought, if poſſible, to be cried down by public authority. It too often paſſes current in the world, not without great injury to ſociety: for honour paid to falſe virtue robs the true of its juſt right, and contributes, by leſſening the rewards of truth, to diſcourage its appearance.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the illiterate Fine Gentleman—military Man, &c.

THERE is a paſſage in Menander, frequently noticed by the moderns, which affirms, that the gods themſelves cannot make a polite ſoldier. It has been juſtly obſerved, by thoſe who have quoted the paſſage, that the ideas of the ancients muſt have differed from thoſe of the moderns on the ſubject of politeneſs, or of the military order; for no profeſſion is ſuppoſed to be ſo polite, in modern times, as the military.

But perhaps, in the preſent queſtion, the true idea of politeneſs is not aſcertained. If it means the graces of external behaviour only, the ſoldier of modern times has often a juſt claim to it; but if it means the poliſh of a cultivated mind, he will often be found greatly deficient. For though it be true, that the various company which he may ſee in the courſe of his campaigns, or in winter-quarters, may give him a knowledge of the living world, of the prevailing manners and the faſhionable modes of addreſs, yet it cannot give him a knowledge of the hiſtory and nature of man, nor ſuch a comprehenſive, liberal, and ſolid turn of

thinking as can ſupply the want of education. As he muſt live much among ſtrangers, he finds it neceſſary to make himſelf agreeable in his manners; for otherwiſe he would often want thoſe comforts of hoſpitality, which in his wandering condition of life are particularly deſirable. But if he had laid in a ſtore of ideas by education, and ſubſequent reflection, his company would be more ſought, and he would find a ſatisfaction from a due degree of rational ſelf-eſteem, to which, with a mind totally deſtitute of literary elegance and philoſophy, he muſt be a ſtranger.

But though in conſequence of long habit, ſtrong parts, and much obſervation, he may acquit himſelf with wonderful ſucceſs in the ordinary converſe of the day, and be eſteemed a man of ſenſe in the conduct of buſineſs, yet he will diſcover his defect, his want of education, whenever he is obliged to have recourſe to his pen to communicate his knowledge. He will then no longer be able to conceal inelegance and inaccuracy by external grace, nor to compenſate the defect of clearneſs, preciſion, or argument, by vehemence of action or vociferation. He will often ſpoil good ſenſe by bad expreſſion, and cauſe contempt by blunders occaſioned through ignorance of orthography. Nor let it be urged that, in his profeſſion, he will have no occaſion to write; for every gentleman muſt, in the ordinary affairs

of

of human life, write letters; and profeſſional men are often obliged to write more formally on profeſſional ſubjects.

It may not be deſirable that ſoldiers in general ſhould value themſelves on learning, or make it their chief ambition to excel in letters. The arts of peace, and the duties of a ſtate of war, are ſo different in their nature, and require diſpoſitions ſo different, that it is not eaſy to excel in the one without a neglect of the other; though Julius Cæſar, Raleigh, and many others, afford inſtances to prove that an excellence in both at the ſame time is poſſible and honourable. But in general, it is to be feared that literary ambition and employments, carried to any great length, might have a tendency to enervate the ſoldier, to give him a diſtate for the hardſhips which he can ſcarcely avoid in his profeſſion, and to render a manly mind rather effeminate. Letters are only to be purſued collaterally with the grand profeſſional object. They muſt not rival it, and much leſs ſupplant it.

A competent knowledge of letters in the ſoldier is all that I maintain to be neceſſary; ſuch a knowledge as enables him to ſpeak and write like a man of liberal education; ſuch a knowledge as enables him to ſeek and find amuſement in his

leiſure hours, in polite literature, and improvement in moral philoſophy, in the knowledge of himſelf, and of the various duties ariſing from the different relations and connections of ſocial and civil life.

It is to the want of knowledge and taſte that much of the improper behaviour of military upſtarts is to be attributed. Feeling themſelves deficient, and unable to ſupport a converſation on rational ſubjects, or to acquit themſelves with credit in ſerious and important buſineſs, and at the ſame time, from the pride of their profeſſion, very unwilling to acknowledge inferiority, they find nothing remaining but arrogantly to claim, by noiſe, ſwaggering, bluſtering, and bullying, that attention, which they have no other method to ſecure. They cannot perhaps converſe rationally, or behave decently, but if you dare to ſhew them that you think ſo, by the expreſſion of a natural contempt, they can pull your noſe, break your head with a candleſtick, or run you through with the unhonoured ſword which never knew an enemy but at a tavern or coffee-houſe. The leſs a man excels in intellectual, the more he is inclined to exerciſe his brute force; but can a profeſſion make peculiar pretenſions to politeneſs, with juſtice, which is ready to give up its claim to rationality, without which there can be no

real poliſh, though there may be a gloſſy varniſh, which, in the eyes of the inexperienced, paſſes for the genuine luſtre?

But though the military profeſſion furniſhes many inſtances of illiterate fine gentlemen, of thoſe who call upon mankind to admire and applaud them for accompliſhments and graces merely perſonal, yet it by no means monopolizes the ſpecies. And indeed, in juſtice to the profeſſion, I muſt acknowledge, that the reaſon why ſo many illiterate perſons are found in it, is not that the profeſſion, which from much leiſure in modern times furniſhes peculiar opportunities for improvement, makes them ſo; but that it finds them ſo; for who are often ſelected for the army? They who are blockheads in their books, careleſs, idle, extravagant, and for that reaſon ſaid to be fit for nothing elſe. Add to this, that young men often obtain commiſſions ſo early in life, as to be weaned from their books too ſoon, to have a turn of mind given them utterly incompatible with ſtudy, and that even thoſe of the beſt abilities and diſpoſitions are often ſent to the regiment before they could poſſibly have made an advancement in learning ſufficiently great to continue its effects on the ſubſequent periods of life.

But illiterate fine gentlemen, I repeat, are by no means confined to the army. There are ſome to be found in almoſt every department; though they are not ſo frequent in this country as they were before the Spectators appeared. At the cloſe of the laſt century, and the commencement of the preſent, your very fine gentlemen conſidered learning as a diſgrace, and with fine eſtates, fine clothes, fine titles, they were content with minds as unfurniſhed as thoſe of their valets or their chambermaids. They could ſcarcely write a card or letter on the moſt common affairs, not even an invitation to a dinner. It was a work and a labour; and, when finiſhed, it was ſcarcely legible, from the badneſs of the hand-writing and the incorrectneſs of the ſpelling; and by a ſtrange perverſeneſs, a letter of this kind was ſuppoſed to bear the marks of peculiar gentility. Beaus of thoſe days, for of them I ſpeak, were indeed blockheads; but, as if they were not really ignorant enough, they took pains to diſplay their freedom from what was then contemptuouſly called clergy, book learning, and pedantry.

The very name of pedantry was artfully contrived by an aſſociation of confederated dunces, to convey ideas of terror; and indeed the ſcholars in the univerſities had given too much reaſon for confounding learning with pedantry, by

by their ſcholaſtic jargon, and their attention to a philoſophy, which was of no uſe in ſociety, and which, while it prevented men from acquiring the agreeable and graceful accompliſhments, ſupplied them with nothing of ſolid utility to compenſate awkwardneſs and pride.

But the caſe is now totally different. Men of rank and fortune bring up their children with care, and beſtow upon them every improvement which their capacity will receive, and there is often found in the genteeleſt and moſt elevated circles of ſociety, the union of the fine gentleman with the polite and well-accompliſhed ſcholar. So that the illiterate fine gentleman will not now be kept in countenance, even in the regions of high life, where he once thought himſelf ſecure from contempt, and really was ſo from the irrational and undiſtinguiſhing ſcorn of pedantry.

If a man is illiterate from misfortune, he is an object of pity, but not of contempt, while he does not give himſelf airs of ſuperiority, and look round for admiration. But in the preſent age, the fop without education, knowledge, taſte, and a power of converſing with ſenſe and ſpirit, muſt find a ſociety of fops equally ignorant with himſelf, if he would avoid deriſion, or if he hopes to gratify his vanity.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAP. I.

Of writing to the People.—Contempt of Popularity.

IT has frequently been pretended by ſome writers that they do not wonder at their own want of popularity, for they never addreſſed the people, but were contented with the approbation of the wiſer few. They judged the vulgar unworthy their attention; and they could not ſtoop from their own imaginary eminences to hold converſe with thoſe who are hidden in the ſhades of obſcurity.

Writers, it is true, in profound philoſophy and abſtruſe ſcience can only addreſs readers of learning, and learned readers are of neceſſity few, compared with the unlearned and the ſuperficial. But works on morality and religion, ſubjects which equally concern every mortal, ought to be addreſſed and accommodated to the taſte and underſtanding of all who poſſeſs common ſenſe; and the more popular they are the more meritorious.

For what is the end propoſed by the authors of ſuch writings? To inſtruct philoſophers? but philoſophers

philoſophers are able to find inſtruction in a thouſand books already before the public, the very ſources perhaps from which the modern writer has derived his ſtream. If pretenders are not able to inſtruct themſelves ſufficiently well, yet they uſually think themſelves able, and the avenues to their boſoms are too often cloſed by ſelf-conceit. True philoſophers are confeſſedly few; but is it the part of a generous man to wiſh to confine the benefit he beſtows to a few, when great numbers are eager to partake of it who are in immediate want of it? Are the writers whoſe works are only addreſſed, and indeed only intelligible to a few, ſo valuable and uſeful as thoſe who have the deſire and the ſkill to bring down wiſdom from the cloud-topt mountain to reſide on the plains below, where myriads are wandering without a guide in the labyrinths of dangerous error? And yet no writers aſſume an air of greater ſuperiority than thoſe who affirm that they write not to the people, but to the purged ear of a few ſpeculatiſts, who dream away life weaving, like the ſolitary ſpider, flimſy cob-webs, which a breath can diſſipate.

The writings of ſuch men can only conduce to innocent and refined amuſement; and they ought to be content with the praiſe of ingenuity. To extenſive utility they can make no juſt claim;

for their utility conſiſts only or chiefly in affording entertainment to a few. Let them poſſeſs the praiſe which is their due, and let them be honoured for the innocence and the ſubtlety of their occupations, but let them not aſſume a ſuperiority over thoſe who ſucceſsfully inſtruct the people at large, whom they haughtily affect to deſpiſe, but who conſtitute the majority of mankind, who have hearts and underſtandings capable of happineſs and improvement, and were intended by Providence to be the receivers of benefits from all thoſe who are in any reſpect able to beſtow them, either by ſuperior talents or greater opulence.

Our Saviour, who knew the duties of a teacher far better than the proudeſt of the ſophiſts or philoſophers, profeſſedly and particularly preached his Goſpel to the poor; that is, to the many, the vulgar, the ignorant, the miſerable, thoſe whom worldly grandeur, worldly wiſdom, and unſanctified ſcience were at all times apt to neglect and deſpiſe. The truth is, the approbation of the poor was not calculated to flatter pride, and therefore it was not deſired; but he who ſought to do good rather than to be applauded, addreſſed his inſtructions more immediately to thoſe who had no other means of receiving it. He addreſſed it in a popular way,

not

not in metaphyſical and ſcientific terms, but in pleaſing parables and in familiar converſation.

And happy are thoſe who are able to communicate good to the minds of men in humble imitation of his popular and engaging manner, who uſe the talents which they have received, not in ſeeking or ſupplying ſpeculative improvement, not in gratifying their own and their fellow-ſtudents pride, but in clothing wiſdom in a dreſs formed to attract the notice and captivate the affection of the erring multitude.

When I enter a large library, and view the bulky tomes of dull learning and abſtruſe ſcience, the labours of many painful lives, now ſtanding like uſeleſs lumber on duſty ſhelves, or affording a tranſient amuſement to a few curious ſcholars, I cannot help lamenting that ſo much induſtry ſhould have been exerted with ſo little advantage to human life. Many of them indeed were once popular, and did good in their generation; but more were never intended to be popular, and never did any good but in affording work to the ingenious artiſan who printed them, or encouraging manufactures by the conſumption of paper. Their authors and themſelves ſleep in peace; but they afford a leſſon to the modern metaphyſical and recondite writers not to over-

value

value their works on account of their utility, and to pay ſome reſpect to moral writings, which, though they have deſpiſed them as trifling, have yet been univerſally read, and have diffuſed virtues and principles, the happy effects of which have been doubtleſs great, and not eaſily to be circumſcribed or aſcertained. A hint of practical wiſdom has often preſerved a whole life from folly and miſery, and thouſands and ten thouſands have been benefited as well as delighted by Addiſon, to every one who has read Malbranche and Locke.

To whatever ſuperiority of underſtanding the metaphyſical ſophiſts may pretend, and whatever contempt they may affect for works which are univerſally well received by the common people, it is certain that it is not the talent of an ordinary genius to render his works acceptable to the majority of his fellow-creatures. He muſt have ſomething in his ſpirit congenial with the better ſentiments of human nature; he muſt have an eaſy and agreeable mode of conveying his ſentiments, a talent by no means contemptible, a talent which thoſe who deſpiſe it would probably rejoice to poſſeſs.

I muſt diſtinguiſh, while I am treating this ſubject, between temporary and permanent popularity.

pularity. Temporary popularity is often gained by contemptible arts, and is itſelf for the moſt part contemptible. The practice of puffing, as it is called by a ludicrous and cant appellation, often raiſes a bubble into the air, which burſts and is annihilated even while the people gaze; but permanent popularity can ariſe only from a general experience of utility and excellence, and notwithſtanding the reaſonings of criticiſm *a priori*, and the arbitrary deciſions of reputed judges, the merit of all literary works muſt be appreciated by their real utility, and their real utility by the extent and duration of their beneficial effect.

Heraclitus is ſaid to have haughtily boaſted, that one good judge was to him as a multitude, and that the numberleſs crowd was as nobody:

Εις εμοι ανθρωπος τρισμυριοι, οι δ' αναριθμοι
Ουδεις.—

This might be ſaid merely in contempt of ſome αμουσοι, taſteleſs critics, who had cenſured him without underſtanding him; but if he meant to prefer the judgment of any individual to the united opinion of mankind at large, I muſt diſſent from him entirely. All men have hearts and underſtandings in ſome degree of excellence;

lence; the general decisions of whole nations must be final; and I do not believe there is so much difference between one man and another in the powers of feeling and judging as the proud imagine and assert when they mean to pay themselves the compliment of claiming a place among the *wiser* few, the select spirits, who from their fancied elevation look down on the multitude wandering in the vale below, just as they behold the reptiles of an ant-hill.

CHAP. II.

Of ſome Beauties in the vegetable World.

SIR,

THERE is in the human heart a *philokalia*, or love of beauty, implanted by nature. Wherever the KALON appears, whether in things animate or inanimate, natural or artificial, the heart is ſoothed to complacency by the contemplation of it; unleſs indeed ſome violent paſſion or habitual propenſity, unleſs avarice or ſelfiſh ambition, gluttony or voluptuouſneſs, have preoccupied its attachments, and gradually overcome every generous inclination.

I hope I ſhall never be ſo entangled by any vice as to loſe my taſte for the delight ariſing from the beauties of nature. I have a paſſion at preſent, and I confeſs it to be a very ſtrong one, while at the ſame time I am confident, that its gratification is attended with pleaſure no leſs innocent than great. Perhaps you will ſmile, when I tell you, that I have fallen in love with trees, and that my particular favourite at preſent is the plane-tree. I have many reaſons for my attachment to that tree, while I do not deny that

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I perceive charms in many others, and am indeed, when I am in the foreſt, a general lover.

But in my attachment to the plane-tree I am by no means ſingular. Herodotus relates, that Xerxes on a march happened to find one of remarkable beauty, with which he was ſo captivated, that he preſented it with a golden chain, to be twined, I ſuppoſe, like a ſaſh around its body, or like a bracelet round one of its arms. Ælian adds, that he alſo placed at the bottom of it, in token of his paſſion, his own jewels, and thoſe of his concubines and ſatraps, and was ſo ſmitten with it, as to forget his expedition, and to ſalute it with the tender names of his love, his darling, and his goddeſs. When cruel neceſſity at laſt compelled him to leave the object of his paſſion, he cauſed the figure of the tree to be ſtamped on a golden medal, which he conſtantly wore in memory of his love.

This fondneſs for a tree I conſider as doing great honour to a man who might be ſuppoſed to be too much elevated with his own grandeur, and faſcinated with the pomp of power, to retain a reliſh for the ſimple beauties of nature, diſplayed in the formation of a tree. The circumſtances related of his behaving like an enamorato, I conſider either as the inventions of the hiſto-

rians,

rians, who were by no means ſcrupulous in point of veracity, or as mere whimſical ſports and frolics, intended for his amuſement amidſt the toils of war. The fact is curious, and adds ſomething to the many honours of this diſtinguiſhed tree.

Every ſcholar knows how greatly it was eſteemed by the men of elegance and taſte among the ancient Greeks and Romans. Homer mentions a ſacrifice under a beautiful plane, καλη υπο πλατανιϛω. The philoſophical converſations of Socrates are repreſented as paſſing under its ſhade, and the academic groves, ſo celebrated, were formed of it. The Romans delighted in it, and many of them carried their veneration ſo far as to water it, if I may uſe the expreſſion, with wine. They thought it not enough, in beautifying their magnificent buildings, to have recourſe to architecture, ſculpture, and painting; but ſought from the hand of nature the chief ornament of their elegant receſſes, the lofty and diffuſive plane-tree.

Nor have the moderns been wanting in reſpect to it, if it be true, as it is ſaid, that the French once prohibited all perſons from planting the tree, who were under the rank of noblemen;

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and even exacted a fine from every plebeian who aſpired to the honour of ſitting in its ſhade.

A tree diſtinguiſhed by the admiration of philoſophers, poets, kings, and nobles, in the politeſt ages and countries of the world, cannot but be intereſting to the modern obſerver, if it were only conſidered as a curioſity. The man of claſſical taſte will view it with ſentiments ſimilar to thoſe which he feels in the contemplation of antique vaſes, urns, medals, ſtatues, the relics of ancient taſte, and the monuments of oriental magnificence. But even in England, a cold northern country, where I imagine its growth is impeded by an uncongenial climate, the plane appears with a degree of beauty which ſeems to juſtify the admiration of the ancients. Its ample foliage, of a vivid and durable verdure, its pleaſing outline, formed by the extremity of the branches, and its tall and ſtately ſtem, diſtinguiſh it moſt honourably in thoſe modern plantations of England, where every goodly tree that will vegetate is ſure to find a place. In our country, ſhade, to afford which this tree ſeems to have been formed by benignant nature, is not, during any long time, in any part of the day or year, neceſſary to indulgence. It is therefore leſs valued here than in warmer climes, where it

united,

united, in a high degree, embelliſhment and utility. I never could learn that it was of much uſe as timber, and, honoured as I wiſh it in the pleaſure-ground and park, I hope it will not ſuperſede the oak in the foreſt.

The oak itſelf is indeed a firſt-rate beauty, when it grows in rude magnificence, unembarraſſed by other trees too near to admit its expanſion. It is itſelf a noble image, and if we aſſociate the idea of ſtrength with grace, it is difficult not to be enamoured with the *tout enſemble*, like the eaſtern prince with his plane-tree.

To a man of taſte in trees, there is ſcarcely a native of the foreſt which has not charms to captivate. And why ſhould not a taſte for trees be cultivated as well as for flowers, birds, ſhells, or any other production of nature? It is equally pleaſing when once formed, and it has ſomething in it more ſublime and elevating, as an oak and cedar are grander objects than the tulip and ranunculus, or the carnation.

But, ſay the men of buſineſs and gravity, is it worth while to beſtow any great degree of attention on any of theſe objects which, as matters of mere contemplation, are trifling and of little uſe?

uſe? I anſwer, that as God has placed man in a theatre, with faculties to perceive beauty, and with beauty to be perceived, it would be a ſullen ſtupidity and ingratitude, not to look and be delighted. Man, it is true, has many ſerious duties to perform, and many evils to ſuffer; and it was for this reaſon that ſo many refreſhments were placed by a kind Providence within his reach. And indeed, it has always and juſtly been ſaid, that few things are ſo conducive to piety as the contemplation of nature, as that knowledge which Solomon poſſeſſed, who knew every tree and plant, from the cedar to the hyſſop on the wall.

A great part of mankind come into the world ſurrounded by opulence, and really have ſo little to do of neceſſity, that if they do not form a taſte for ſcience in general, and for a knowledge of nature in particular, they will be ſtrongly tempted to do nothing, or ſomething worſe than nothing, to ſeek in vice a refuge from the pain of inaction. But when a man has once become an elegant ſpectator of the vegetable world of trees in particular, which almoſt every where occur, he will be able to gratify his taſte without trouble, without expence, without danger of corruption, and with a probability of moral and religious improvement, ariſing from reflection.

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The mere man of this world, the votary of avarice and ambition, ſees more charms in Change-alley, or at a levee of a great man, than nature throughout all her works is able to diſplay. But ſurely his pleaſures are alloyed by anxiety and diſappointment; and he might take more delight even in them, if they were diverſified by a taſte for the delights of nature exhibited on the mountain, or in the foreſt; and indeed in the garden, as it is now laid out in England, with a cloſe imitation of the inventreſs of all real horticultural beauty, majeſtic yet ſimple nature. I pity the man from my heart, who cannot, like Xerxes, forget awhile pomp, power, and riches, and fall in love with a tree. Adieu.

CHAP. III.

Of the Pretenſions to Learning made by vain and ſuperficial Perſons in the Company of the illiterate.

ALL kinds of deceit and affectation deſerve to be detected and expoſed to cenſure, if it were only that truth may not be overborne and diſcouraged by their prevalence. It is certainly injurious to ſociety that French paſte ſhould be ſold for diamonds, and the counterfeit of Birmingham paſs in currency for the coin of the Mint in the Tower.

Among a variety of arts practiſed by many of the vain and ſuperficial in the preſent age, who make it their firſt object to be admired by the company into which they happen to fall, is that of endeavouring to ſhine as men of ſkill in ſcience, as well as in the art of pleaſing, and of a taſte for books as well as for buckles. Unfortunately, their attention to trifles in their youth has prevented them from acquiring a ſtore of real learning, and they are therefore obliged to have recourſe to hooks and baits in fiſhing for literary praiſe.

They take as much care as they can to give the converſation a literary ton, only when they are

are ſure the company makes no pretenſions to excellence in literature. If there be a ſcholar among them, they are ſhy of it, and introduce ſubjects connected with the gay world, and ſlily throw contempt on learning as pedantry.

I have ſometimes been diverted with hearing one of theſe gentlemen harangue in a ſemicircle of ladies and beaus on the character of the claſſics, talk of the beauty of the oriental languages (in which he comprehended the Greek and Roman) and admire the original Latin of Homer, and the fine Greek of Virgil, though, as I had been credibly informed, he never could proceed at the grammar-ſchool beyond Cordery's Colloquies, with Clarke's tranſlation, and had been removed thence to a ſhop, where he had ſerved behind a counter ſeven years, without looking into any other book than Kent's Directory. But he had come to a fortune lately, and having been already a beau, had been led, by making out as well as he could the meaning of Cheſterfield's Letters, to aſpire at pleaſing in all companies, and to affect the character of *all-accompliſhed*. From reading the pamphlets and papers of the day, he had picked up a few phraſes, which he hardly underſtood, on moſt ſubjects, and I aſſure you, was conſidered by the party, in which he diſplayed his talents, not only as a very agreeable man, but

alſo as a very good ſcholar, happily uniting in himſelf, to the confuſion of pedants, ſolid ſenſe with graceful accompliſhments. He is a great quoter of verſes; not that his ſtock is very large. I believe he may have learned by heart a hundred lines in all, from various poets, on various ſubjects; and by well timing his quotations, he paſſes for a man not only of ſingular taſte in poetry, but of a prodigious memory.

This artifice of quoting is often practiſed by thoſe who, without being coxcombs like the above mentioned gentleman, in dreſs and the graces, wiſh to obtain an eſteem and reputation to which they poſſeſs no juſt claim. I know a man who has read a little, but is by no means diſtinguiſhed for his learning or genius, and who having committed about forty lines of Homer to his memory, when a ſchoolboy, contrives to introduce a few ſounding verſes in all ſtrange company, with ſuch addreſs as to put himſelf off for a wonderful claſſic; whereas in truth he now never reads any thing but Hoyle and the Public Advertiſer.

Quoters are indeed very numerous, and I muſt acknowledge that they are often very entertaining; but they muſt not, however, ſteal away the palm of learning by legerdemain, or a *deceptio viſus*, which too often ſucceeds

ceeds with common company. It is very eaſy for any man, who does not employ his ſtudious hours in a better way, to commit to memory, like a ſchoolboy's taſk, a number of beautiful paſſages in proſe and verſe, on ſubjects likely to occur in the courſe of various converſation. And though I give the quoters the praiſe of pleaſant companions, provided they are not too prolix, yet they ſhould not be ſuffered to impoſe on mankind ſo much, as to aſſume a ſuperiority over real ſcholars, who have been treaſuring up original ideas, while they have been imitating parrots or profeſſed ſpouters in committing words only to memory, purpoſely for the ſake of oſtentation.

There are many who aſſume the office and authority of critics in all literature, who have no pretenſion to judgment beyond the cut of a coat, the ſhape of a ſhoe, the ſtyle of hair-dreſſing, a minuet, or the dreſs of an actor or actreſs on the ſtage. They have caught a kind of technical phraſeology from periodical and newſpaper criticiſms, and they utter their opinions like oracles, in the little audience which has learned to look up to them as to dictators. A new book is for the moſt part ſeverely handled by them, eſpecially if it happens to take with the public, and is really a good one. It argues a wonderful perſpicacity in them to be able to find out defects in works which the million are fools enough to buy and

admire. They do not indeed make a point of reading the books they condemn or praiſe. They are furniſhed with vague terms of general praiſe and cenſure, and can give laws to their ſubjects, like the tyrant who ſaid, My will ſtands for my reaſon.

The uſing of long words derived from the Greek or Latin, commonly called hard words, has long been an artifice of thoſe who wiſhed for the praiſe of learning and knowledge, without giving themſelves the trouble to acquire them. Apothecaries are often ridiculed for their uſe of medical terms, which they often miſunderſtand and miſapply; but when they uſe them among the illiterate to raiſe opinion, their "ampullæ et "ſeſquipedalia verba" may have a good effect; for whatever contributes to encreaſe confidence in the medical practitioner, contributes at the ſame time, to the cure of many diſtempers. By the way, it is deſirable that apothecaries, to whom the firſt application is made in the greateſt diſtreſſes of human nature, had a more liberal education than can fall to the lot of thoſe who, at the age of fourteen, or earlier, are bound to a long ſtate of mechanical ſervitude.

Freethinkers, libertines, infidels, prating diſputants in divinity and morality, with little learning and no principle, are very apt to add

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an authority to their converſation, by uſing expreſſions which they do not underſtand, and citing books which they never read, or totally miſunderſtood. Their affectation deſerves not only ridicule, but all the ſeverity of ſatire, all the inſult of contempt. They produce falſe or miſtaken authorities as genuine, which miſlead hearers, who might be proof againſt the nonſenſe of their ſophiſtry, if it were unembelliſhed by the pomp of unintelligible words, and unſupported by the appearance of a ſolid and profound erudition.

With reſpect to the mere pretender to learning, who attempts not to corrupt or miſlead his ſimple admirers, though his affectation is ridiculous, yet it is certainly leſs culpable in converſation than ſcandal or indecency. I can freely pardon one who, in order to appear a man of ſcience and philoſophy, reads on the temporary topic, previouſly to his entering into company; as I remember a gentleman who always made it his practice, on the appearance of an eclipſe, a comet, or the rumour of an earthquake, to retail an article from the Dictionary on the ſubject for a month in all the various companies in which he fell, ſo as to raiſe a very exalted opinion of his learning, and an idea that he was as well acquainted with all parts of ſcience as with theſe, though in fact he was re-

markably ignorant of every thing but the firſt four rules of arithmetic.

The evil of this affectation is, that it is a deceit, and no deceit ſhould be in general tolerated in converſation, becauſe it diminiſhes the confidence of ſociety; that it often overbears the modeſt ſcholar, for ignorance is bold and vehement, and that it diffuſes error by aſſerting things without knowledge and without examination, as truths confirmed and indiſputable.

I do not condemn the principle which ſtimulates men to wiſh for the eſteem which is due to ſcience; it is often a laudable and always an innocent principle; but I wiſh it to operate in another manner, in exciting a degree of induſtry which may enable men to acquire that knowledge of which they ſolicitouſly ſeek the appearance. The trouble often taken to ſupport the faiſe glitter, might obtain a conſiderable portion of the ſolid gold; and would probably improve the mind in the reſearch, ſo as to be ſuperior to all the little arts of empty oſtentation; arts which fail of their deſign, and cauſe contempt of thoſe who might paſs unobſerved, or even be honourably *noticed*, if they were contented with their own plumes.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Corruption of ſome public Schools.

SIR,

I AM aware that the diſpute concerning the preference of private ſchools to public, or of public to private, is as trite as the common obſervations on the weather. I mean not to trouble you with compariſons, but to acquaint you with my own caſe, and leave you to form your own opinion.

I am confident that I derived ſome of the greateſt vices and misfortunes of my life from a faſhionable ſchool. I was placed there when I was but an infant, and lived as a FAG under a ſtate of oppreſſion from my ſchool-fellows unknown to any ſlave in the plantations. Many hardſhips I ſuffered by day; but I would have borne them without complaint if I had been permitted to repoſe at night, and enjoy thoſe ſweet ſlumbers which my fatigue and my age invited: but ſeveral nights in a week I was diſturbed, at various hours in the night, from the mere wantonneſs of cruelty, thruſt out of bed, and in the coldeſt weather ſtript of the cloaths. My health and my growth, I have no doubt, were injured by the

ill uſage I ſuffered, and the conſtant fear in which I ſpent my infant days. I was beaten by the ſenior boys without the leaſt reaſon, and often robbed of the little ſolace I had ſought by expending my pocket allowance with the old apple-woman. It would be tedious to enumerate the various hardſhips I underwent before I was twelve years old. Let it be ſufficient to ſay, that in the age of innocence I ſuffered in mind and body more than many adult criminals who are convicted of flagrant violations of the laws of their country. My inſtructors, in the mean time, were mild, and my parents affectionate; but the wanton tyranny of my ſchool-fellows prevented me from enjoying either eaſe from clemency, or delight from the tenderneſs of parental love.

As I grew older I was emancipated from the ſlavery, and perhaps became a tyrant in my turn, though I believe I had learned compaſſion from my own miſery. But I was delivered from one kind of ſlavery only to relapſe into another; for as I mixed among great boys, it became neceſſary, as I thought, to adopt their manners and their vices.

One of the firſt bad propenſities I learned was to a profuſion of expence, and to the ſupply of my pecuniary deficiencies by running in debt wherever I could gain credit, either in purchaſing my indulgences,

indulgences, or in borrowing money. I had, indeed, in common with ſeveral others of my claſs, ſome very expenſive habits; for I conſtantly went to a paſtry-cook's or the coffee-houſe, and very frequently to the play clandeſtinely. My pocket allowance was one ſhilling a week; a mere trifle, and by no means commenſurate to my outgoings; in conſequence of which I learned to take the methods practiſed by many others, which were to pawn at ſome diſtant houſe, known by the ſign of the three blue balls, whatever I had poſſeſſion of, either from the indulgence of relations, or as a neceſſary apparatus of a ſcholar. My watch has been in pawn a hundred times before I was fifteen. My books were ſold as ſoon as I had moved into a higher claſs where they were not immediately wanted, and pawned whenever I had an opportunity of ſupplying their place on the day we were to read them, by borrowing others of ſome boy whom I could beat into compliance. A thouſand other tricks were played to raiſe money, many of which had a tendency to deſtroy in the very bud all principles of real honour and common honeſty. And the intemperance both in eating and drinking, which the money we received from our friends and raiſed by our wits enabled us to indulge in, I am convinced, laid the foundation for many chronical diſtempers, which at the very moment while I am writing, render my

exiſtence painful, and will probably abbreviate it.

There prevailed an opinion, not only among the boys but among ſome parents, that to be miſchievous and wicked was a ſign of ſpirit and genius; and our ſallies were often encouraged by ſmiles of approbation, though corrected by the official diſcipline of the maſters whenever they were diſcovered. It was thought an honour to ſuffer in a good cauſe, and we deſpiſed the rod while we were talked of as heroes by the poor people whom we injured, by the little boys who admired us, and by *quondam* ſcholars, who uſed frequently to ſay that they were quite as bad, or worſe than we, when they were at ſchool. I am aſhamed to relate the cruel and unjuſt feats which we performed and gloried in as frolics that diſtinguiſhed us more than any eminence in learning or in virtue. Breaking windows, cheating poor venders of fruit, abuſing the helpleſs with affronting language as they paſſed, deſtroying and injuring property wherever there was no danger of detection; theſe were ſome of our heroic deeds: but they were trifles in compariſon with others which I could ſpecify, and for which the poor would have been condemned to Botany Bay, or even hanged. But we were admired; and the more we diſtinguiſhed

ourſelves

ourſelves in theſe ways, the more likely we were thought to become one day Miniſters of State, or Archbiſhops, or Lord Chancellors.

Juſt before we went to college we concluded that we were men, and ruſhed into vices which naturally and unavoidably produced loathſome diſeaſes; but even theſe we conſidered as feathers in our caps, and as manly diſtinctions. It may be thought extraordinary, but it is true, that few of us deemed ourſelves ſufficiently qualified for college till we had run deeply in debt with a ſurgeon.

In the midſt of ſuch cares and employments, it cannot be ſuppoſed that we paid much attention to the object of education, improvement of ourſelves in valuable and polite knowledge. Indeed we were not anxious on that ſubject; if we could but prove our parts and excite the admiration of young noblemen, as great geniuſes, by our vicious exploits. The grand purpoſe was to diſplay parts and ſpirit; and we had often heard that the only way to be a Charles Fox was to be a libertine. I am ſorry to ſay, that even our parents, many of whom had been at the ſchool before us, did not diſcourage our irregularities as they ought to have done, but laughed at them with apparent complacency.

I have found ſince, that we were not ſent to ſchool ſo much to acquire learning as to make connexions; that is, to make ourſelves agreeable panders, ſycophants, or humble companions to ſome great man, who might take us by the hand, as it is called, and place us one day on the epiſcopal or judicial bench. Alas! the end, ſuppoſing it is likely to be accompliſhed, was not worth the means! the means were ſuch as tended to deſtroy every purpoſe and every end for which a good man wiſhes to live. Health, learning, fame, fortune, conſcience, fell an early ſacrifice. I cenſure not the ſchools themſelves, nor the maſters, who were unable to ſtem the foul and rapid torrent of faſhion, ignorance, impudence, and folly united.

But I condemn parents, who cannot but ſee theſe things, and yet will not co-operate with maſters in the reſtoration of ſalutary diſcipline; who, for the mere chance of a fortunate connection, riſque every thing that is rationally valuable; who talk of their childrens flagrant enormities as harmleſs and laughable frolicks, puerile levities, fine ebullitions of ſpirit which mark a ſprightlineſs of parts, and promiſe future eminence. I cannot help, at the ſame time, deſpiſing thoſe perſons who are always talking, before

boys

boys and others, of their own fooliſh feats at ſchool, and endeavouring to make it appear that they were as miſchievous, wicked, and malicious, as a truly diabolical ſpirit could render them, at an age when every lovely quality is the natural growth of the unpolluted mind. Much of the ill conduct of boys and young men ariſes from the converſation of thoſe filly triflers, and I have reaſon to lament that I ever heard it.

Your's, &c.

SERO SAPIENS.

CHAP. V.

Of Archbiſhop Secker's Literary Character—his Style, particularly of his Sermons.

THE foundation of that ſingular eminence and dignity to which Archbiſhop Secker arrived was certainly laid at the Academy of Mr. Jones of Glouceſter, who had the honour to educate another moſt excellent divine, that ſhining ornament of the church and nation Biſhop Butler.

It may reaſonably be concluded, that the perſon who trained two characters ſo diſtinguiſhed was himſelf reſpectable; and he certainly deſerves the eſteem of poſterity, if it were only that two ſuch lights of the church as Secker and Butler derived ſome of their luſtre from his lamp.

The character of Mr. Jones could not, I imagine, have been perfectly known to the biographers of the Archbiſhop, Dr. Porteus and Dr. Stinton, whoſe reputed benevolence and liberality forbids one to believe that they would have ſpoken rather ſlightingly of Mr. Jones if they had known how much he was eſteemed by the Archbiſhop, and

and how well he appears to have deſerved the moſt honourable mention. Their words are—"The Archbiſhop received his education at ſeveral private ſchools and academies in the country. . . . In one or other of theſe ſeminaries he had the good fortune to meet and to form an acquaintance, with ſeveral perſons of great abilities. *Among the reſt in the academy of* ONE MR. JONES, kept firſt at Glouceſter, then at Tewkeſbury, he laid the foundation of a ſtrict friendſhip with Mr. Joſeph Butler, afterwards Biſhop of Durham."

They ſay nothing of improvements made at one Mr. Jones's Academy, but only of a connection which he had the good fortune to make there. I am convinced, from their characters, that they could not intend to undervalue Mr. Jones becauſe he was a diſſenter, and his academy was not honoured with the diſtinctions of the two *Almæ Matres*. But I believe they might not have ſeen Mr. Secker's pleaſing letter concerning Mr. Jones, not many years ago preſented to the public by that good Chriſtian, Dr. Gibbon, in his Life of Dr. Watts.

Let us hear the amiable youth, for ſuch he appears to have been, thus ſpeaking of his preceptor, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Jones.

"Mr.

"Mr. Jones," ſays he, in a letter to Dr. Watts, "I take to be a man of real piety, great "learning, and an agreeable temper; one who "is very diligent in inſtructing all under his "care, very well qualified to give inſtructions, "and whoſe well managed familiarity will al- "ways make him reſpected. He is very ſtrict "in keeping good orders, and will effectually "preſerve his pupils from negligence and immo- "rality. And accordingly I believe, there are "not many academies freer in general from "thoſe vices than we are. . . . We ſhall "have gone through our courſe in about four "years time, which I believe nobody that once "knows Mr. Jones will think too long. . . . "We paſs our time very agreeably betwixt "ſtudy and converſation with our tutor, who "is always ready to diſcourſe freely of any thing "that is uſeful, and allows us, either then or at "lecture, all imaginable liberty of making objec- "tions againſt his opinion, and proſecuting "them as far as we can. In this and every "thing elſe he ſhews himſelf ſo much a gentle- "man, and manifeſts ſo great an affection and "tenderneſs for his pupils, as cannot but com- "mand reſpect and love."

The future archbiſhop gives a ſhort account of Mr. Jones and his plan, in the ſequel; and

and it is impoſſible not to think highly of the preceptor, and to lament that he ſhould be ſpoken of as an obſcure perſon, ſcarcely worthy of mention in the life of his ſcholar, afterwards the moſt diſtinguiſhed primate of his time in Chriſtendom.

I believe it to have been a very happy circumſtance for Mr. Secker that he was educated in a diſſenting academy, and under ſo good a tutor. I attribute much of his future eminence to this circumſtance, as well as to the connexions he fortunately formed there; that purity, that dignity, that decency of character which enabled him to fill the great offices of the church with ſingular weight and efficacy. There may have been deeper ſcholars, or greater divines, but there has ſeldom been a prelate of more perſonal authority, and in whom eccleſiaſtical dignity ſhone with brighter effulgence.

He was not without enemies, and many prejudices were formed againſt him; but this is no new phenomenon in the moral world. I alſo once conſidered him as a worldly politician, who depended chiefly on external appearance, on diſtance or diſſimulation, for the attainment of reſpect. I thought him an artificial character; but, though he might not be without pride, and might

might aſſume ſomething of a behaviour rather affected and reſerved, yet, upon a review of his life and works, both literary and moral, he appears to be one of thoſe whom poſterity will conſider as a truly great man. His charity and his induſtry were ſingularly great. But I refer my reader to his biographers for his general character, while I amuſe myſelf with the contemplation of him chiefly as a man of letters.

Educated in the diſſenting perſuaſion, and under diſſenting tutors, he had paid leſs attention to polite letters, and more to divinity, than is uſually beſtowed by ſtudents in the univerſities. Young men in Oxford and Cambridge frequently arrive at an age for orders, and become ſucceſsful candidates for them, who have ſtudied ſcarcely any other divinity than ſuch as is to be found in Ovid's Metamorphoſis and Tooke's Pantheon. Hebrew they uſually neglect, as partaking but little of claſſic elegance; but Mr. Secker, at the age of eighteen, ſays, ſpeaking of Mr. Jones's method, "I began to learn Hebrew "as ſoon as I came hither, and find myſelf able "now to conſtrue and give ſome grammatical "account of about twenty verſes in the eaſier "parts of the Bible, after leſs than an hour's pre-"paration. We read every day two verſes "a-piece in the Hebrew Bible, which we turn "into

" into Greek, no one knowing which his verſes " ſhall be, though at firſt it was otherwiſe."

" By the time he was three and twenty," his biographers relate, " he had read over carefully " a great part of the Scriptures, particularly the " New Teſtament in the original, and the beſt " comments upon it, Euſebius's Eccleſiaſtical " Hiſtory, the apoſtolical Fathers, Whiſton's " Primitive Chriſtianity, and the principal wri- " ters for and againſt miniſterial and lay con- " formity, with many others of the moſt eſteem- " ed treatiſes in theology."

Few regularly bred divines, as they are termed, apply themſelves to divinity at ſo early an age; and indeed, through the defect of a knowledge and of a taſte for it in youth, many, after obtaining orders, ſtill continue to ſtudy, if they ſtudy at all, the theology of Athens and Rome. But the diſſenters ſtudy divinity at an early age, and if they had united the ſtudy of the belles lettres with it, in a due proportion, I believe their divines would have made a ſtill more honourable appearance than they have done, though they are, and ever have been, both numerous and reſpectable.

The belles lettres enable a man to adorn his knowledge and recommend his writings to general

ral notice. If Dr. Secker had united a little more polite learning to his theology, I think his writings would have been more popular. They want the graces of a beautiful ſtyle and diction.

But it will be ſaid that he was a very popular preacher; and how could he become ſo great a favourite if his language were not elegant, nor his ſtyle of eloquence adorned by the captivating graces of claſſical beauty? I anſwer, by the ſolidity of his reaſoning, united with the authority of his perſon, the gravity of his manner, and the ſanctity of his character.

"Quid iſthoc erat eloquentiæ admirabilis," ſays Dr. John Burton, "quod a pleriſque tam "magnificè prædicatum accepimus? Non ſanè "in ſententiis δεινοτης Demoſthenica, non dic-"tionis ardor ſplendorque, non ingenii exul-"tantis luſus, non rhetoricorum pigmenta, et "quæ aures delinire ſolet, periodi decurrentis "clauſula numeroſa et canora; verum erat in "ſententiis ακριβολογια planè Ariſtotelica, ſtyli-"que penitus caſtigata luxuries, nihil operosè "elaboratum, nihil temerè effuſum: pro re natâ "ſine fuco, ſine ornatu dictionis caſta ſimplici-"tas: quicquid illud erat, verbis inerat το πιθον, "et in popularium aures animoſque influebat "mitis

" mitis oratio : geſtûs decori gratia, et in vultu
" placida ſeveritas, ſingula commendavit ; imo
" et dictis quaſi fidem imperavit ipſa dicentis
" authoritas. Quod erat philoſophi et theologi,
" ſatis habuit diſtinctè, graviter dicere ; quod
" vero erat rhetorum, ornatè dicere, ille non
" tam neſcivit, quam ultrò neglexit. Quid
" multa ? Orator hic noſter ſine dicendi artificio
" veram eloquentiæ laudem conſecutus vide-
" batur."

" Ornatè dicere," ſays Dr. Burton, " ultrò
" neglexit ;" but Dr. Burton, on this occaſion, is a profeſſed panegyriſt, diſplaying his own eloquence in the encomiaſtic ſtyle. If Dr. Secker had been a polite writer he would have ſometimes ſhewn the graces of fine compoſition without intending it. Many of his writings are addreſſed to the learned, to whom *ornatè dicere* would not have been improper. Few who poſſeſs a beautiful ſtyle chuſe to conceal their talent on all occaſions, though before hearers of ordinary capacities and coarſe taſte, they may either not think it worth while to produce any thing elaborate, or that the plainer and leſs adorned their ſtyle the more intelligible and effectual will be their diſcourſe ; but Dr. Secker preached moſt of his ſermons before the politeſt congregation in England ; and the graces of diction

would

would not have failed to be taſted by thoſe who frequented St. James's church. In that region, it could not be ſaid, when he diſplayed the beauties of language, that he was caſting pearls before ſwine.

But it is candid to ſuppoſe that he was influenced by the example of St. Paul, who glories that his preaching was not with enticing words of man's wiſdom, not as pleaſing men, but God, who trieth the heart. It has been ſaid, *Cujuſcunque orationem vides politam et ſolicitam, ſcito animum in puſillis occupatum.* But perhaps this doctrine is chiefly inculcated by thoſe who revile the excellence which they cannot reach. Why ſhould eloquence, which ſerves all other cauſes moſt eſſentially, be prohibited from becoming the handmaid of divinity?

But if his compoſition is not elegant, what rendered him popular? His elocution, the grace and dignity of his perſon, the earneſtneſs and gravity with which he enforced his ſolid doctrines.

It has not yet been conſidered duly whether his ſtyle is attic. I think it is not; as it appears to me rather to approach to the dry and the jejune. They who affected atticiſm

in

in antiquity frequently fell into the dull. The attic ſtyle may be compared to the dreſs of the Quakers. It is neatneſs without finery and without ſuperfluity. But the dry ſtyle may rather be ſaid to reſemble the Sunday dreſs of a country hind. It is clean; it has no ſplendour indeed, but at the ſame time it has no grace. It has no attraction from ſhape or colour; perhaps it rather diſguſts by its meanneſs and poverty. It preſents not the idea of a healthy living body, but of a body dried by art for the purpoſe of the anatomiſt. It is meagre and hungry.

There is a great difference in the diſcourſes of Dr. Secker. Some are, if it is poſſible, too plain, unleſs they were formed for the congregation of Cuddeſden, a little village near Oxford, where Dr. Secker, when biſhop of that ſee, long reſided and officiated as a pariſh-prieſt. If he thus adapted his diſcourſes to his audience, he is worthy of more praiſe than any excellence of ſtyle can procure. And there is reaſon to think he did, as his Act ſermon before the univerſity of Oxford, and ſeveral others, are written in a very pleaſing and correct ſtyle, and ſuch as may perhaps juſtly deſerve the name of the attic. Though, after all, the ſtyle is not the excellence on which they are chiefly to be valued.

They

They abound in good ſenſe, and ſolid obſervations, collected by a cautious judgment, from remarks on real life and experience. They abound in fruit; while many rhetorical declamations, much more popular in the great city, have little to recommend them but tranſitory and barren bloſſoms.

The cool, diſpaſſionate ſtyle of Dr. Secker is the ſtyle of truth and good ſenſe; and it is to be wiſhed that all hearers and readers had good ſenſe enough to give it due attention. But, in order to this, they muſt be all rational; they muſt be that already which it is the deſign of ſermons to render them; ſo that for the purpoſe of attaching the minds of a mixed multitude, the paſſions and imagination muſt be ſometimes addreſſed. But too great an attention to theſe leads to a falſe glare, an unſubſtantial eloquence, that glitters indeed like baſe metal, when new, but ſoon loſes its luſtre, and poſſeſſes neither the beauty nor the value of pure gold.

I do not know whether the ſtyle of Secker's ſermons is to be recommended as a model; but I am ſure their good ſenſe, their candour, their diſpaſſionate manner, are ſuch as muſt be approved by all who unite a ſound judgment with the zeal of religion. There are few pieces of

didactic religion more excellent than the catechetical lectures. They are at once rational and pious, learned and familiar. His charges are given in a ſtyle of authority becoming a great prelate, and contain ſuch admonition as, if followed, cannot fail to render the clerical function the moſt honourable in fact, as it is in idea, of all that ſupply the various wants of human nature.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Idea the Antients entertained of Perjury—its Puniſhments—Execrations.

AN apprehenſion has been expreſſed by good and wiſe men that the religion of an oath is, in the preſent age, leſs and leſs regarded. Indeed the infidel principles which have recently been diffuſed with uncommon induſtry and art, have an immediate tendency to produce, in a reading age, this ſhocking corruption.

Sunt qui in Fortunæ jam caſibus omnia ponunt
Et nullo credunt, mundum rectore moveri,
Naturâ volvente vices et lucis et anni,
Atque ideo intrepidè quæcunque altaria tangunt.

JUVENAL.

Thoſe writers who call themſelves philanthropiſts, and who, in the calm retreat of their muſæums, indulge their vanity by compoſing treatiſes againſt religion, would do well to conſider a moment that they are opening a door for villains to enter and break down every ſalutary reſtraint of law and equity. If ſuch writers really have that regard which they profeſs for mankind, let them

them prove it, not by diſſeminating ideas which introduce confuſion and every evil work, but by adding force to every awful ſanction, which is found by experience to encreaſe confidence between man and man, and to facilitate intercourſe, by rendering contracts inviolable and teſtimony credible.

But the general ſubject of oaths and their violation has been amply diſcuſſed by divines and caſuiſts, and common ſenſe muſt ſee at once the ſad effects of prevailing perjury.

I ſhall preſent the reader with a few ideas of the ancient heathens on oaths, and the puniſhment due to the violation of them. Thoſe who unfortunately neglect Chriſtianity, and the admonitions of the Chriſtian divine, may, perhaps, pay ſome attention to the opinions of men who were guided merely by their reaſon in ſtigmatizing this atrocious offence.

Agamemnon in Homer ſwears, that he delivers up Briſeis inviolate, by the Furies who puniſh the *perjured*, not only here, but ΥΠΟ ΓΑΙΑΝ, under the earth:

————Ερινύες, αἱ θ' υπο γαιαν
Ανθρωπους τινυνθαι, ὁτις κὲ επιορκον ομοσση.

And he concludes with ſolemnly wiſhing, that if he had ſworn falſely he might ſuffer all thoſe many ſorrows which the gods award to him who offends them by perjury.

Ει δε τι των δ' επιορκον, εμοι θεα ΑΛΓΕΑ δοιεν
ΠΟΛΛΑ ΜΑΛ', ὁσσα διδουσιν, ὁ τις σφ' αλιτηται ομοσσας.

Heſiod affords reaſon to believe that the creed of his age reſpecting perjury was, that the ſin of the perjured father was viſited on the children as well as on himſelf.

Ος δε κε μαρτυρίησιν εκων επιορκον ομοσσας
Ψευσεται, εν δε δικην βλαψας, ΝΗΚΕΣΤΟΝ
ΑΑΣΘΗ.
Του δε τ' αμαυροτερη γενεη μετοπισθε λελειπται.

"Whoever willingly ſwears a falſe oath in giv-
"ing his evidence, and injures juſtice, inflicts
"on himſelf an injury *without remedy*, and his
"generation after him ſhall fall to decay."

In the idea of the antients every falſe oath was an imprecation of vengeance on the head of him who ſwore; and it was common for the hearers to call down the wrath of heaven on the violator. In the covenant between Menelaus and Paris, previouſly to the ſingle combat, after the ſlaughter

ſlaughter of the lambs, and the libation of the wine, the people ſaid with one accord,

" Moſt glorious and almighty Jove, and the " other immortal gods, whoever firſt ſhall vio- " late this oath, may their brains be ſhed on " the ground like this wine, both theirs and " their childrens; and may their wives be " raviſhed."

Ζευ κυδιστε, μεγιστε, κ᾽ αθανατοι Θεοι αλλα,
Ὁπποτεροι προτεροι υπερ ὁρκια πημηνειαν,
Ωδε σ᾽ εγκεφαλος χαμαδις ῥεοι ὡς οδε οινος,
Αυτων, κ᾽ τεκεων· αλοχοι δ᾽ αλλοισι μιγειεν.

Here alſo prevails an idea that the puniſhment of perjury was to be extended to poſterity; an idea never entertained but when the crime was conſidered of a moſt flagitious nature.

The epithet ορκιος was applied to Jupiter in particular, by which it was intended to ſignify, that to him vengeance belonged for violated oaths. The general idea was, that the crime was of ſuch magnitude as not to be puniſhed ſufficiently by human laws, and that Heaven itſelf viſited the perjured with peculiar misfortunes. Heſiod repreſents the Furies going their circuit every fifth day of the month to haunt the boſom of the perjured wretch.

Εν πεμπτη γαρ φασιν Ερινυας αμφιπολευειν
Ορκον τινυμενας.———————

In the *Bouleuterion* or Council Chamber of Olympia there was a menacing ſtatue of Jupiter, with a thunderbolt in each hand, and an inſcription on the baſe, denouncing woe to him who ſhould call the god a witneſs to a falſehood.

In ſome countries the puniſhment by human law was death, and in others, that kind and degree of penalty, whatever it might be, which the culprit, whom the falſe witneſs endeavoured to injure, would have undergone if the perjury had been believed.

There is a well known ſtory of Glaucus and a Mileſian, related by Herodotus, which conveys an idea of the ſentiments of the antients concerning perjury. They acknowledged that preſent gain might be the conſequence, but that future puniſhment, though ſlow, was generally ſure. *Raro antecedentem ſceleſtum, deſeruit pede pœna claudo.*

Glaucus was celebrated all over Greece for honeſty. A certain Mileſian, under apprehenſions of danger at home, and invited by the voice of fame, came and depoſited a ſum of money

money with the honeſt Glaucus. After a conſiderable time, the ſons of the Mileſian demanded the depoſit. Glaucus expreſſed ſurpriſe, and pretended ignorance. But as he had a regard for his character, he told them he would endeavour to recollect the circumſtance; and moſt undoubtedly would pay whatever he ſhould find due. He gained delay, and in the interval piouſly reſolved on a journey to Delphi to aſk the god whether he might take the liberty of making himſelf maſter of a large ſum by the eaſy mode of perjury. The honeſt man wanted a diſpenſation, and probably thought, that if the prieſteſs ſhared the gain, he ſhould not find much difficulty. But the god returned this anſwer, embittered by a ſevere ſarcaſm.

"Glaucus, it will certainly be for your ad-
" vantage at preſent to gain your cauſe by a falſe
" oath, and to embezzle the money. Swear
" then; for death is the lot of him who ſwears
" truly, no leſs than of him who ſwears falſely.
" But there is a ſon of Orcus without a name,
" who, though he has neither hands nor feet,
" yet will quickly overtake you, and ſeize and
" deſtroy your houſe and all your race. Not
" ſo is it with the man who ſwears truly; for
" his generation ſhall flouriſh more and more."

The affrighted Glaucus ſued for pardon: But the prieſteſs anſwered and ſaid, "To tempt thy "God and to ſucceed in thy enterpriſe are "equally flagitious." Poor Glaucus went home and refunded the money to his Mileſian creditors; but himſelf and his whole family were ſoon after utterly extirpated. "So that," concludes the honeſt Herodotus, "it is the beſt way when "money is depoſited in one's hands to think no-"thing more about it than of reſtoring it, when "claimed, to its right owners."

This well known and very ancient ſtory diffeminated through Greece the idea that the gods viſited the ſin of perjury by cutting off the perjured man and all his progeny. There was ſcarcely any crime among the heathens which they thought the gods puniſhed with a vengeance ſo unrelenting.

I cannot help thinking, while I am on this ſubject, of the ſolemn words in our communion ſervice. If we take the ſacrament (which is a ſolemn oath) unworthily, *We kindle God's wrath againſt us, we provoke him to plague us with divers diſeaſes, and ſundry kinds of death.* I wiſh thoſe who are capable of perjury would apply theſe dreadful words to the commiſſion of that crime.

The

The ancients certainly did believe that ſuch would be the conſequence of it.

They ſeem alſo to have had an imperfect idea of that law in which it is awfully ſaid, "I the "Lord thy God am a jealous God, and viſit the "ſins of the fathers upon the children unto the "third and fourth generation of them that hate "me, and ſhew mercy unto thouſands in them "that love me and keep my commandments." For their doctrine is, on one hand, that

In patrem dilata ruunt perjuria patris,
Et pœnam merito filius ore luit.

CLAUDIAN.

and on the other, that

Ανδρος δ' ευορκου γενεη μετοπισθεν αμεινων.

The idea was univerſal among them that the puniſhment, though tardy, was certain and dreadful, and that the progeny of the perjured was involved in the puniſhment.

Similar opinions occur in Eccleſiaſticus. "A "man that uſeth much ſwearing ſhall be filled "with iniquity, and *the plague ſhall never de-* "*part from his houſe.* If he ſhall offend, his "ſin ſhall be upon him; and if he ſwears falſely, "*his houſe ſhall be full of calamities.*"

What was the cauſe of the deſtruction of Troy, but perjury?

The violated oath of Laomedon and its effects, though but a fable, ſhew the ſentiments of the ancients on its dreadful criminality.

Diodorus Siculus relates that perjury was puniſhed with death among the Ægyptians, as a crime which at once violated the piety due to the gods, and deſtroyed confidence among men, the ſtrongeſt bond of human ſociety. A milder ſentence prevailed afterwards, according to the celebrated law of the Twelve Tables,—Let the *divine* puniſhment of perjury be deſtruction; and the *human*, *diſgrace*. *Perjurii pœna divina, exitium; humana, dedecus;* accordingly with us it is puniſhed with the pillory.

Strabo ſays, that the crime was capital among the Scythians, and among the Indians puniſhed by cutting off the fingers and toes; and I believe there are countries where the tongue, as the offending member, was amputated.

From every enquiry, it appears that the heathens conſidered the crime of falſe-ſwearing as the moſt offenſive to God and man. To the gods

gods its puniſhment was in great part left, with a full perſuaſion that vengeance would be taken, though not immediately, yet ſeverely and dreadfully. Chriſtians ſurely have much greater reaſon to ſtand in awe and ſin not in this particular. I omit paſſages from Scripture on the ſubject, as they are obvious, and as I intended only to produce the opinions and practices of thoſe who could not be influenced by Chriſtianity.

But if the crime becomes more frequent among us than it was formerly, it is incumbent on the rulers of the nation to inveſtigate and reſcind the cauſes, and to encourage religion and its profeſſors by their countenance and example.

Quid leges ſine moribus, vanæ proficient?

The multiplication of oaths in petty offices, in law buſineſs of ſmall conſequence, and in commercial tranſactions, as at the Cuſtom-houſe in particular, conduces greatly to leſſen the veneration due to an oath, and to encreaſe perjury.

On the frequency of oaths, hear the heathen philoſophers. "Avoid oaths entirely, if poſ-"ſible," ſays Epictetus; "if not, as much as "you can." And Simplicius adds, that ſwearing ſhould be utterly declined unleſs on occaſions of the higheſt moment. "Some," ſays Euſe-

bius, a philoſopher quoted by Stobœus, "adviſe "men to take care that what they ſwear is the "truth; but I adviſe them not to ſwear at all, "if they can eaſily avoid it." The words of Hierocles are remarkable:

Εν τη συνεχειᾳ του ομνυειν ραδιως αν μεταπεσοι τις εις επιορκιαν—Ουτω γαρ αν τηρησαιμεν το αει ευορκειν ει μη κατα χρησοιμεθα τοις ορκοις.

"In the frequency of oaths any man may "eaſily fall into perjury. We may preſerve "ourſelves free from perjury, if we do not uſe "oaths frequently and unneceſſarily."

What would theſe ſenſible and pious ancients have ſaid if they had heard the oaths adminiſtered at public offices, in courts of juſtice, and other places, on trifling occaſions, by clerks, attornies, and cryers, who read the moſt awful forms juſt as if they were running over a leaſe, or galloping through *lands, meſſuages, tenements, and hereditaments*. But this haſte and indecency is unavoidable, ſay they, becauſe it is neceſſary for the diſpatch of buſineſs.—Of buſineſs, Sir, ſays the clerk in office, or the attorney, knitting his brow, and looking with all the air of ſelf importance—And what buſineſs? Is it ſuch as will juſtify endangering the peace of mind, and

the

the everlaſting happineſs of ourſelves and our fellow creatures? O, Sir, no preaching, ſays the clerk or attorney, for the juſtices or commiſſioners are juſt come—here, take the book five or ſix of ye, and ſwear away—there, there—very well—kiſs the book—you kiſs your thumb—kiſs the book, I ſay—there—*So help you God.*—Call the reſt—come, make haſte—here is room for more thumbs upon the book.—We cannot ſtay here all day—ſwear away, I ſay—So help you God—TACTIS SACROSANCTIS CHRISTI EVANGELIIS!

How muſt the awe which the common people entertain for God and magiſtracy be diminiſhed, by proceedings thus haſty and irreverent, in the midſt of noiſe, riot and confuſion! Government muſt lay in more timber for pillories, if oaths are thus adminiſtered, and if infidelity is encouraged by the example of the Great.

Let modern experience determine whether the opinion of the ancient is not true, when he ſays,

Φυεται εκ πολυορκιας ψευδορκια. PHILO.

"Falſe ſwearing is the natural conſequence "of much ſwearing."

CHAP. VII.

Of Sacred Poetry—its Introduction into Schools, &c.

SIR,

THERE is, I think, a prejudice againſt ſacred poetry which cannot be juſtified. To praiſe God with the voice of pious gratitude, and to celebrate him with that genius which he gave, is the nobleſt employment of the mind of man. I wiſh indeed that more men of genius had undertaken this office. But men of genius have been ſeduced by the world. They wiſhed very naturally for praiſe; and they thought *ſacred poetry* not likely to confer it in the ſame degree as profane. If Shakeſpeare, Dryden, and Pope had directed their powers to it, great would have been the effect! If they had ſtruck the Davidean lyre, what multitudes would have joined in the ſong, and have been led by melody to the altar, and from the altar of the church to the choir of heaven.

It has been concluded from the rarity of excellence in ſacred poetry, that it is ſcarcely attainable; that there is ſome inſurmountable obſtacle to perfection in its very nature; that ſacred

ſubjects

ſubjects are already ſo exalted that poetry cannot raiſe them any higher. It is true, that moderate poetry cannot raiſe them; but what think you of Milton's muſe? Cowley very juſtly ſays, "none but a good artiſt will know how to do it: neither muſt we think to cut and poliſh diamonds with ſo little pains and ſkill as we do marble: for if any man deſign to compoſe a ſacred poem, by only turning a ſtory of the Scripture, like Mr. Quarles, or ſome other godly matter, like *Mr. Haywood of Angels*, into rhyme, *he is ſo far from elevating of poeſie, that he only abaſes divinity.* He who can write a profane poem well, may write a divine one better; but he who can do that but ill, will do this much worſe."

Divinity has been too often debaſed in England by bad poetry: but even that bad poetry has had a good effect on correſponding readers. It has pleaſed and informed thoſe who were bad critics though good men. Youth and ignorance have been induced by rhimes and metre to learn by heart valuable inſtruction. Minds that could not riſe to the elevation of Milton have been nouriſhed by the humble poetry of the good Watts. That ſaint (for he has a better title to the name than many in the Calendar) often ſung ſweetly; but there was ſomething wanting to make his ſongs generally acceptable to the lovers

lovers of claſſical poetry. "His devotional "poetry," ſays Johnſon, "is, like that of "others, unſatisfactory. The paucity of its to-"pics enforces perpetual repetition, and the "ſanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of "figurative diction."

Johnſon's judgment of Watts as a poet appears to be juſt. But if he means to affirm of ſacred poetry that its topics are few, and that it rejects the ornaments of figurative diction, I think his opinion liable to controverſy. There is no ſubject of morality, copious as it is, which will not admit of being ſpiritualiſed. Heaven, hell, earth, and ſea, abound with topics for ſacred poetry. But the critic ſays, "the "ſanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of "figurative diction," an opinion formed with leſs deliberation than moſt of the deciſions of this judicious writer; for is not the model of all ſacred poetry, that of the Bible, more figurative than any other? Figures are no where more abundant, nor more lively, than in Iſaiah, the Pſalms, and the Song of Solomon. If the ornaments of figurative diction are not frequent in Watts, there is reaſon to believe the poet voluntarily ſunk himſelf in the Chriſtian. In the preface to his imitation of the Pſalms he ſays, "I am ſen-"ſible I have often ſubdued my ſtyle below the

"eſteem

"eſteem of the critics, becauſe I would neither "indulge any bold metaphors, nor admit of hard "words, nor tempt an ignorant worſhipper to "ſing without underſtanding." In his preface to his Hymns, he ſays, "The metaphors are ge-"nerally ſunk to the level of vulgar capacities. ". . . . Some of the beauties of poeſy are ne-"glected, and ſome wilfully defaced. . . . . I "have given an alloy to my verſe, leſt a more "exalted turn of thought or language ſhould "diſturb the devotion."

An eſtimate, therefore, of what may be done in ſacred poetry muſt not be formed from what has been done by Watts; for he profeſſedly lowered his genius, and wrote below his own ſtandard, for the ſake of accommodating his readers in humble life, who were not judges of poetry, but who, in the offices of devotion, ſtood moſt in need of aſſiſtance. That ſingular virtue can never be ſufficiently eſteemed, which mortified the pride of human nature, by ſacrificing the love of praiſe to the deſire of doing good among thoſe whoſe eſteem is too often little valued, the poor and the uninſtructed.

But there are many in whom exalted poetry and refined taſte are happily combined. For theſe a higher ſtyle of devotional poetry is juſtly required;

quired; and therefore I cannot help wiſhing that ſome of the greateſt poets had exerted themſelves in ſacred poetry, and produced works of prime merit and value, and fit to be placed among the firſt claſſics of our country.

It cannot be ſaid that nothing is extant of this kind. Milton's works are very much in the ſtyle of ſacred poetry. Cowley's Davideis is not eſteemed a fortunate attempt. Pope's Univerſal Prayer and Meſſiah ſhew what he could have done if he had choſen to bend the force of his genius to it. Addiſon had a turn for it, and ſucceeded well in his imitation of the Pſalms. Young has deſerved the reputation he has gained on ſacred ſubjects by his ſublimity and originality.

Authors of inferior genius have abounded in the walk of ſacred poetry. Mrs. Rowe has delighted many readers. Merrick's genius was formed for ſacred verſe. But a multitude of poems and divine ſongs have had nothing in them divine but the epithet in the title-page. The great numbers of rhymers pretending to ſacred poetry evinces that there is a great love of the ſubject. It is a fertile field, from which, when the ſun of true genius ſhall ſhine upon it, a fine crop of fruits, and a beautiful diſplay of flowers, may reaſonably be expected.

Mr.

Mr. Seaton's prizes at Cambridge were laudably intended to turn the attention to ſacred poetry. But I know not how it is, though prizes excite a great deal of uſeful and elegant mediocrity, they have ſeldom called forth the diſplay of firſt rate genius. They have raiſed meteors, but not created ſuns. The Seatonian poems have however to boaſt a Smart and a Porteus, and many others, who, if not equally known to fame, have ſingular merit. Free-born genius ſeems to ſtand too much in awe of thoſe who are to examine her pretenſions and decree the prize. In that ſervile ſtate the noble freedom of genius ſeems loſt in a timidity which debilitates the mind. Yet I do not know a collection of poems on divine ſubjects more laudable than thoſe of the Seatonian poets, Bally, Glynn, Scot, Hey, Jenner, and other ſucceſsful candidates for the prize. The claſſical reader, of a ſerious and religious turn, will rejoice to find the happy union of claſſical elegance with pious ſentiments. I wiſh this inſtitution was more encouraged by public notice, that the poet's emulation might be excited, and a taſte for poems which tend to inſpire piety in a moſt agreeable manner, rendered more prevalent.

If men of the firſt rate genius had dedicated their talents to the ſublimeſt ſubject, the Great God

God of heaven and earth, by hymns of gratitude, by celebrating his works, and recommending every moral and religious duty of obedience to his will, with all the charms of numbers, and in all the colours of a fine imagination, they would have converted many to Chriſtianity, and inſpired thoſe with the love of virtue who are now often ſeduced by the licentious muſe to vice and ſcepticiſm. Let men of genius enter this field, and, leſt they ſhould think the province does not belong to them, let them recollect that the example of compoſing hymns was ſet by their great predeceſſors Homer and Callimachus; and that Milton derived from ſacred ſubjects a ſtyle of poetry which all the enlightened world admire.

CHAP. VIII.

Of ſome Writers of Sacred Poetry in Latin—Prudentius, and others—Of their Introduction into Schools.

IT has been much the faſhion among ſceptical writers to extol Julian the apoſtate. They are deſirous of attributing to him every excellence, and particularly the liberality of an enlightened philoſopher. I leave it to the reader to judge how liberal he was, when he prohibited all Chriſtians the ſtudy and attainment of Grecian literature. He meanly hoped, by keeping them in ignorance, to be able to effect that ruin which all his power, and all the wiſdom and inſolence of his adherents, was unable to accompliſh. He could not truſt to a fair engagement in the controverſial war; but interpoſed his imperial authority to take the arms out of the hands of his opponents, in order to oppreſs them with ineffectual reſiſtance.

It was during this diſgraceful prohibition of the Greek authors that Apollinaris, to ſupply the Chriſtians with claſſics of their own, wrote the hiſtory and antiquities of the Hebrews to the reign of Saul, in twenty-four books, and in a profeſſed

profeſſed imitation of Homer. Aſpiring to ſupply the want of the claſſics in all reſpects, he alſo imitated Menander in comedy, Euripides in tragedy, and Pindar in lyric poetry.

It was a pious and a ſpirited deſign; but I cannot help conſidering it as rather ridiculous, that a man ſhould think it ſo eaſy a thing to ſupply, on an emergency, the loſs of the fineſt writers in the world, by the ſubſtitution of his own haſty effuſions. There is ſomething mechanical in the idea. An artiſan of the preſs might properly ſay, on hearing that books were deſtroyed or prohibited, Regard it not, we can eaſily make others; but to ſit down with as much coolneſs as you ſit down to write a letter, to write ſuch books as might ſupply the want of Homer, Menander, Euripides, and Pindar, argues either a too high an opinion of one's own, or too low a one of their excellence.

The man undoubtedly meant well, and his works would have been valuable as curioſities if they had all deſcended to poſterity. Sozomen, who probably ſpeaks with the warmth of zeal, affirms that the imitations of Apollinaris equalled the originals.

As his Hebrew antiquities were intended for ſchools, whence the claſſics were at that time tyrannically

tyrannically excluded, they might be truly uſeful. They might contribute greatly to diffuſe a knowledge of Jewiſh hiſtory among the early Chriſtians and converts from heatheniſm.

Many modern writers have, like Apollinaris, expreſſed a wiſh that the Chriſtian claſſics were introduced into claſſical ſchools; but I fear their zeal has exceeded their judgment.

The pious Monro, in his burning zeal to promote Chriſtian education, ſays, "what can be more "ſurpriſing than to find the Chriſtian books ſo "far diſcarded, that very few, if any of them, "are to be found in our grammar ſchools? . . . "One need not ſcruple to ſay that Nonnus's "metrical paraphraſe of the Goſpel of St. John "is infinitely more fit to be put into the hands "of Chriſtian youth than *Homer's Iliads*; and "Macarius's Homilies than any part of the "writings of the blaſphemous Lucian? And "certainly the very elegant and polite Orations "of Muretus may be uſeful to the Chriſtian "youth on ſeveral accounts. And why ſhould "not the excellent poems of Prudentius, Na-"zianzen, Palingenius, Sedulius, and Textor, "together with a great many more, both an-"cient and modern, Chriſtian poets, particu-"larly the ſeveral elegant Latin verſions of the

"Pſalms

" Pſalms of David, as alſo the noble Greek pa-
" raphraſe of the ſame divine book done in he-
" roic verſe by the celebrated Apollinaris,
" Biſhop of Laodicea, and deſigned originally
" for the benefit of the Chriſtian youth; why
" ſhould not, I ſay, the poems of ſuch eminent
" and learned Chriſtians, at leaſt in Chriſtian
" ſchools, be preferred before thoſe of Ovid,
" Horace, or Martial, before Heſiod or Theo-
" critus, or any other of the Pagan writers?"

With a ſpirit of fervent piety the author proceeds to recommend the uſe of Chriſtian poets in Chriſtian ſchools. His perſuaſion will, however, be ineffectual; and indeed it muſt be owned, that what he ſays militates againſt a claſſical education in general; for whatever may be urged by ſuch zealots, Homer, Virgil, Horace, and the other fine writers of the better ages, will never find equivalent ſubſtitutes in Apollinaris, Prudentius, Palingenius, Nazianzen, Sedulius, and Textor. The boy will not acquire claſſical taſte from thoſe who poſſeſs not claſſical beauty; and as to piety, he might probably learn the elements of it at leaſt *as well* in proſe and in his vernacular language.

The claſſics, in my opinion, ſhould be cleared for the uſe of ſchools of all corrupting ideas and

paſſages; and then they will not only not be hurtful, but highly improving both to morals and taſte: for the morality in which they abound has the great advantage of being impreſſed on the mind with all the force of eloquence, and the captivating graces of poliſhed language. Many of the Chriſtian poets, whom the zeal of well-meaning perſons would ſubſtitute in the place of the claſſics, have little more poetry or elegance than the Chriſtmas verſes of the bellman.

Prudentius is eſteemed the beſt among the Chriſtian claſſics; and though I cannot think, with Sidonius Apollinaris, that he is to be compared to Horace, yet I have obſerved many paſſages which have ſuch a degree of excellence as entitles them to the epithet PRETTY. Prudentius was called by the old literati *Amænus*, as if it were his proper name.

The following paſſage from the *Hymnus Epiphaniæ* has been much and juſtly admired. The ſubject is, a congratulation of the innocents maſſacred by Herod. It is quoted in Dr. Edward Sparke's *Scintilla Altaris*, or Primitive Devotion, and afterwards by Dr. Horne in his Sermon on Innocents day.

Salvete, flores Martyrum,
Quos lucis ipſo in limine,

Chriſti inſecutor ſuſtulit,
Ceu turbo naſcentes roſas.
Vos, primæ, Chriſti victimæ,
Grex immolatorum tener,
Aram ante ipſam, ſimplices,
Palmâ et coronis luditis.

This favourite paſſage is thus introduced:

Audit tyrannus anxius
Adeſſe regum principem,
Qui nomen Iſraël regat,
Teneatque David Regiam.
Exclamat amens nuncio,
" Succeſſor inſtat—pellimur—
" Satelles, i, ferrum rape,
" Perfunde canas ſanguine.
" Mas omnis infans occidat
" Scrutare nutricum ſinus
" Interque *materna ubera*
" Enſem cruentet *puſio*.
" Suſpecta per Bethlem mihi
" Puerperarum eſt omnium
" Fraus, nequa furtim ſubtrahat
" Prolem virilis indolis."
Transfigit ergo carnifex
Mucrone diſtricto furens
Effuſa nuper corpora
Animaſque rimatur novas.
Locum minutis artubus
Vix interemptor invenit,
Quo plaga deſcendat patens
Juguloque major pugio eſt.
O barbarum ſpectaculum!
Inciſa cervix cautibus

Spargit

Spargit cerebrum lacteum
Oculoſque per vulnus vomit.
Aut in profundum palpitans
Merſatur infans gurgitem
Cui ſubter arctis faucibus
Singultat unda et halitus.
Salvete, &c.

The claſſical reader will immediately perceive a deficiency of that fine ſpirit and that ſolid judgment which dignify the poets of a better age. It would be eaſy to ſelect many pretty paſſages, but they are uſually ſurrounded with ſo much flatneſs and proſaic metre, as to be almoſt loſt, like the duſt of gold in the ſands of a river.

Pious readers may find a good deal of amuſement in the peruſal of Prudentius; but then they muſt not read him as a claſſic of the firſt rank, to which elevation zealous devotees wiſh to raiſe him, and, in the very attempt to exalt, debaſe him.

The moſt eſteemed poem, according to Crenius, is the tenth hymn of the Cathemeron, *in exequiis defunctorum.* The eleventh of the ſame book, *octavo calendas Januarias*, is extolled in high terms by *Buckner*, who calls it, *egregium ac plane divinum; cui neque ad dictionis elegantiam nec concinnitatem numerorum, tum inventionis acumen atque ingenium quidquam deeſt.*

The tenth hymn concludes thus:

Patet ecce fidelibus ampli
Via lucida jam Paradiſi;
Licet et nemus illud adire,
Homini quod ademerat anguis.
Illic precor, optime ductor,
Famulam tibi præcipe mentem
Genitali in ſede ſacrari,
Quam liquerat exul et errans.
Nos tecta fovebimus oſſa
Violis et fronde frequenti,
Titulumque et frigida Saxa
Liquido ſpargemus odore.

The following paſſages are from the eleventh, on the Nativity:

Jam mella de ſcopulis fluunt
Jam ſtillat ilex arido
Sudans amomum in ſtipite
Jam ſunt myricis balſama.
. . . . . .
Peccator, intueberis
Celſum coruſcis nubibus.
Cum vaſta ſignum buccina
Terris cremandis miſerit
Et ſciſſus axis cardinem
Mundi ruentis ſolvent, &c.

But I have cited enough to give a taſte of Prudentius, and as his books are common, to them I refer the reader.

Aurelius

Aurelius Prudentius Clemens was born in Spain about the year 348, and flouriſhed in the reign of Theodoſius the Great.

He firſt ſtudied the law and pleaded at the bar, and was afterwards promoted in the army and in civil rank, which is chiefly collected from his own verſes.

Frænos nobilium reximus urbium
Jus civile bonis reddidimus, reos
Tandem terruimus, militiæ gradu
Evectum pietas principis extulit.

There is but little known of his private life; but it is generally believed that, after a life of civil honours, he died in old age.

In poetical excellence he roſe greatly above the Chriſtian poets of his time, though, after all, he cannot be ſaid to have often ſurpaſſed the line of mediocrity. It is a great defect in him, as he does not compenſate it by ſublimity, that he ſcruples not to violate the common rules of proſody. A falſe quantity appears to him a venial poetic licence. Among many others I ſelect only the inſtance of Ειδωλον, *Idolon*, the penultima of which he makes a ſhort ſyllable.

He is not without his zealous encomiaſt. Barthius calls him a treaſury of elegance, and a poet not to be paſſed over like one of a vulgar and common genius. He honours him with the name of the *Divine* Pindar.

In the *Scaligerana* he is called not only a good but a very elegant poet; but general praiſe is little to be depended on.

Like a Chriſtian, he ſpeaks humbly of himſelf on all occaſions, though not in the ſtyle of Horace's

Sublimi feriam carmine ſydera.

Carminis leges amor aureorum
Nominum parvi facit, et loquendi
Cura de ſanctis vitioſa non eſt,
Nec rudis unquam.

He comforts himſelf with ſaying—

Adprobat tamen Deus
PEDESTRE CARMEN et benignus audit.
Attamen vel infimam
Deo obſequelam præſtitiſſe prodeſt
Quicquid illud accidet,
Juvabit ore perſonâſſe Chriſtum.

It is common among pious writers to declare, that they voluntarily renounce the elegances, the graces,

graces, the beauties of ſtyle and compoſition as beneath their dignity. It is certainly an ill judged renunciation; for why ſhould not ſacred ſubjects have a dreſs correſponding to their dignity, and why ſhould profane and licentious compoſitions have advantages over them which will never fail to draw the attention of mankind, and frequently cauſe a majority of votes in their favour?

CHAP. IX.

The ſame Subject continued—Vida—Arthur Jonſton—Buchanan.

LATER poets have approached much nearer to Auguſtan elegance and purity than thoſe early Chriſtians who wrote about the age of Prudentius, and who ſeem to have neither admired nor ſtudied the beſt models of poetic diction. Their firſt object was the expreſſion of piety. So far they were indeed right; but as they thought it proper to expreſs their piety in verſe, it was ſurely worth while to render that verſe agreeable to the reader, by the graces of a fine ſtyle. I am ſure the cauſe of piety would have been greatly promoted by an union with elegance. They diſgraced piety as far as they were able, by cloathing her in a mean dreſs; and thoſe who admired their ſentiment could not but deſpiſe their diction.

Not ſo Marcus Hieronymus Vida. He drank at the Virgilian fountain; and borrowed the beauties of Pagan poetry to decorate the ſentiments of Chriſtian devotion.

Sat ludo ſcenæque datum.———
Carmina nunc mutanda; novo nunc ore canendum
Jamque

Jamque alias Sylvas, alios accedere fontes
Edico: jam nunc, polluto calle relicto,
Hâc iter ęsto.———————
Quo rapior? quo vota trahunt? quæ tanta cupido?
Sevocat abductam mortali à corpore mentem
Ignotaſque vias latè jubet ire patentis
Ætheris et liquido mihi ſedem figere cœlo?
Terra, vale; curæque humiles hominesque, valete.
Tollor humo, totuſque levem propè vertor in auram,
Aeriaſque plagas ſuperare et linquere nubes
Sub pedibus, rapidoque viam conjungere ſoli,——
Dulce mihi, ſummoque in vertice fiſtere mundi.

He goes on in a manner ſimilar to this in a hymn to *God the Father*, of near one thouſand lines, in which, lamenting his inability to do juſtice to his ſubject, he ſays,

Sint ideo potius tibi noſtra ſilentia laudi
O Deus, O jubar æternum! inviolabile lumen.

Which appears to me to have been imitated in Thomſon's Hymn.

———But I loſe
Myſelf in Him, in light ineffable.
Come then, expreſſive Silence, muſe his praiſe.

A ſimilar fire from the altar glows with fervent heat through the hymns to the Son and Holy Ghoſt. If there is any fault, it is one which does honour to his invention, a too great

exuberance, or even prolixity. There are many moſt animated paſſages in the hymn to the Holy Ghoſt; a fine ſubject for the ſublimeſt genius.

An Deus in nobis?——————
——————Deus inſidet ipſe
Intus agit Deus, et noſtro ſe pectore verſat. . . . ;
Fallor? an ille ruit calor? ecce mihi artubus ardor
Ingruit; ante oculos lux en! mihi plurima oberrat.
——Sancte, veni; penitus te mentibus inſere noſtris
Aura potens, amor omnipotens, cœli aurea flamma.

The whole volume of *Hymni de rebus Divinis*, breathes the ſpirit of divine love, and exhibits a great ſhare of Virgilian grace. Theſe qualities are the great *deſiderata* in ſacred poetry.

In his hymn on the Euchariſt, ſpeaking of the bread and wine, he very injudiciouſly calls one Ceres, and the other the draughts of Bacchus.

——————nec crede ſapori
Dum guſtu exploras *Cererem* laticeſque *Lyæos*.

But no wonder at any abſurdities, when he was deſcribing the tranſubſtantiation.

Allowance muſt be made in reading Vida for many Popiſh errors, and ſome abſurdities which aroſe from his deſire of deſcribing the doctrines of Chriſtianity in the language of heathen mythology.

thology. Oil and vinegar would coaleſce as ſoon as the polytheiſtical fictions of Greece and Rome with the pure religion of Jeſus Chriſt.

I am aware that Julius Scaliger ſays of the hymns and eclogues, *Puerilia ſunt et plebeia. Catulli venerem dum vult aſſequi, delicias lenociniis plebeias fecit. De Poet. lib.* 6. But Julius Scaliger is a literary tyrant, and of his arbitrary dictation it may be ſaid, *ſtat pro ratione voluntas.*

As I have given a ſpecimen of Prudentius on the ſubject of the Innocents, I will cite another from Vida on the ſame ſubject. Prudentius for once, perhaps, has the advantage.

Beatæ animulæ, parvuli integelluli,
Quos hauſit immaniſſimi regis furor
Ab ubere abreptos, parentium ab ſinu,
Dum perdere ſimul autumat, regno cavens,
Incognitum ſibi aureum puellulum,
Quem nuntiabat ſiderum præſentia
Regem univerſis nuper ortum gentibus.
Vos vere veluti gemmulæ quas primulo
Aduſſit albicans pruina primulas,
Ætatulæ ipſo concidiſtis floſculo.
Pro illo ante vobis contigit pulchrè mori
Qui pro omnium vitâ immolandus venerat,
Beatæ animulæ, floſculi cœleſtium.

Vida's *Chriſtiad*, though founded on a moſt ſublime ſubject, is generally thought not to have

advanced beyond the line of mediocrity. There is in it a deficiency of fire. But the poet was evidently awed by the grandeur of his enterprize, and his genius ſunk under his apprehenſions of failure. I cite the following ſpecimen on the Reſurrection, a theme which might inſpire the dulleſt of bards.

Ibunt aligeri juvenes, cœlumque profundum
Horrifico ſonitu implebunt, atque ære recurvo
Quatuor a ventis excibunt undique gentes:
Judicis ad ſolium properabitur æthere toto
Ipſe alte effultus, montiſque in vertice ſummo
Arbiter effulgens circumferet ora tremenda
Secernetque pios, dextraque in parte locabit.

There is in this, and throughout the whole poem, an even tenor of elegant verſification; but there is too little of the *Mens divinior*, and the *ignea vis*.

Perhaps the critics have expected too much in this poem, and, as it commonly happens, have, in conſequence of a diſappointment of unreaſonable hope, revenged themſelves by a contempt equally unreaſonable.

Vida is leſs known and read in Great Britain than the two Latin tranſlators of the Pſalms, George Buchanan and Arthur Jonſton.

I conſider

I conſider Buchanan as one of the moſt illuſtrious ornaments of Scottiſh literature. He was born in 1506, and died in 1582. His works conſiſt of a Dialogue *de jure regni apud Scotos*; the Grammatical Rudiments of Linacre, tranſlated from Engliſh into Latin; the Hiſtory of Scottiſh affairs; a poetical paraphraſe of David's Pſalms; and Miſcellany Poems.

Joſeph Scaliger, in a complimentary copy of verſes to Buchanan, ſays,

Namque ad ſupremum perducta poetica culmen
In te ſtat, nec quo progrediatur, habet.
Imperii fuerat Romani Scotia finis;
Romani eloquii Scotia finis erit.

He is extolled in the higheſt terms as an hiſtorian; but at preſent I am to conſider him as the poetical paraphraſt of the Pſalms.

The ninth and tenth verſes of the eighteenth Pſalm are univerſally admired, even in the production of Thomas Sternhold.

The Lord deſcended from above,
And bowed the heavens high,
And underneath his feet he caſt
The darkneſs of the ſky.
On Cherubs and on Cherubim
Full royally he rode,
And on the wings of mighty winds
Came flying all abroad.

Merrick

Merrick has given them thus:

Incumbent on the bending ſky,
The Lord deſcended from on high,
And bade the darkneſs of the Pole
Beneath his feet tremendous roll.
The cherub to his car he join'd,
And on the wings of mightieſt wind,
As down to earth his journey lay,
Reſiſtleſs urged his rapid way.

Let us hear Buchanan.

Utque ſuum Dominum terræ demittat in orbem
Leniter inclinat juſſum faſtigia cœlum:
Succedunt pedibus fuſcæ caliginis umbræ
Ille vehens curru volucri, cui flammeus ales,
Lora tenens levibus ventorum adremigat alis,
Se circum furvo nebularum involvit amictu
Prætenditque cavis piceas in nubibus undas.

This is well paraphraſed; except perhaps that there is an unpardonable *cacophony* in terminating two ſucceeding lines with words ſo ſimilar in ſound as *ales* and *alis*. But this I confeſs is not the moſt favourable ſpecimen of Buchanan; and I by no means think it equals the admired ſublimity of Sternhold.

It may not be diſagreeable to preſent the ſame paſſage to the reader in the words of Arthur Jonſton.

Æthere

Æthere depreſſo, ſolis deſcendit ab alto
Nubila fidereos implicuêre pedes.
Ventorum volucres humeris circumdedit alas
Scandit et ætherei flammea terga chori.

The twenty-third Pſalm is one of the moſt popular.

The Lord my paſture ſhall prepare,
And feed me with a ſhepherd's care, &c.

Buchanan tranſlates it thus:

Sicut paſtor ovem me Dominus regit:
Nil deerit penitus mihi
Per campi viridis mitia pabula
Quæ veris teneri pingit amænitas
Nunc paſcor placidè, nunc ſaturum latus
Feſſus molliter explico.
Puræ rivus aquæ lenitèr adſtrepens
Membris reſtituit robora languidis
Et blando recreat fomite ſpiritus
Solis ſub face torridâ.

I ſubjoin the verſion of Jonſton.

Blandus ut upilio, me paſcit conditor òrbis,
Ne mihi quid deſit, providus ille cavet
Dat ſatur ut recubem pratorum in gramine molli;
Ducit et ad rivos lenè ſonantis aquæ.

I am ſorry Jonſton verſified all the Pſalms in the elegiac meaſure, however different their ſubject or ſtyle. His verſes are pretty and correct;

rect; but he does not appear to reach the ſublimer ſtrains of David's lyre. But, leſt I weary my reader with Latin citations, I will conclude with a ſhort extract from a poetical paraphraſe of the twenty-third Pſalm by Dr. Jortin.

Me tuos inter numerare, paſtor
Summe, dignaris, quibus ipſe virgâ
Aureâ ductor referas beati
Ruris honores.
Paſcimur campis, ubi lene ridet
Florido natura decorâ cultu
Fonſque vitales ſaliente rivo
Sufficit auras.

CHAP. X.

Miſcellaneous Literature—The Pædotrophia of Scævola Sammarthanus.

PHYSICIANS have often written didactic poems on various ſubjects connected with the buſineſs of their faculty. Armſtrong's poem on health is one of the beſt I have ſeen; but the *Syphilis* of Fracaſtorius, and the *Pædotrophia* of Sammarthanus, are not without diſtinguiſhed beauty.

Though Sammarthanus's *Pædotrophia*, or *Art of Nurſing*, is in Latin; yet the poet deſcends to ſuch minute precepts as really concern the nurſes and goſſips, who, unleſs they are as expert in the Latin as in the vulgar tongue, will not be the better for them.

The following paſſage, in which the poet recommends to mothers the ſuckling of their infants, is exquiſitely beautiful:

Ipſæ etiam Alpinis villoſæ in cautibus urſæ,
Ipſæ etiam tigres, et quicquid ubique ferarum eſt
Debita ſervandis concedunt ubera natis;
Tu, quam miti animo natura benigna creavit,

Exuperes

Exuperes feritate feras? nec te tua tangant
Pignora, nec querulos puerili e gutture planctus
Nec lacrymas miſereris, opemque injuſta recuſes,
Quam præſtare tuum eſt, et quæ te pendet ab unâ?
Cujus onus teneris hærebit dulce lacertis
Infelix puer, et molli ſe pectore ſternet?
Dulcia quis primi captabit gaudia riſus,
Et primas voces, et blæſæ murmura linguæ?
Tunè fruenda alii potes iſta relinquere, demens,
Tantique eſſe putas teretis ſervare papillæ,
Integrum decus, et juvenilem in pectore florem?
Tu, cui concedunt meliorem numina mentem,
Sume ultro quodcunque operæ, quodcunque laboris,
Ut ſerves opus ipſa tuum et pia munera præſtes.

" The very bears on the Alpine rocks, the " very tigers themſelves, and the fierceſt wild " beaſts on the face of the earth, give ſuck to " their young ones. Will you, whom nature " has kindly formed with tender ſympathy, ex- " ceed the brutes in cruelty? And will you not " ſuffer the little pledges of your own loves to " touch you, and will you not pity the moans and " tears of the poor infants? And will you refuſe " your aid which it is your duty to afford, and " which depends upon you alone? In whoſe arms " ſhall the ſweet burthen be laid; on whoſe ſoft " boſom ſhall the poor child recline? Who firſt " ſhall taſte the delight of the firſt ſmiles, liſten " to the firſt ſyllables, and the babbling of its

" liſping tongue? Ah, fooliſh woman! will
" you let another enjoy all this pleaſure? Is it
" worth while to loſe ſo much for the ſake of
" preſerving beauty and delicacy of ſhape?

" You, who have better principles, by the bleſ-
" ſing of heaven, take upon you whatever trouble
" and fatigue may attend this maternal duty,
" that you may preſerve your own work, and
" perform the pious offices of a good mother."

I muſt leave this paſſage to be dilated on by huſbands who wiſh to inculcate the ſalutary doctrine which they contain. The verſes gave me a high opinion of the taſte and ſenſibility of their writer; and it would be a happy circumſtance for *babes and ſucklings* if they could be as perſuaſive as they are pleaſing.

I will add another paſſage, *excellent* both for its advice and compoſition, on giving the child due exerciſe.

Nec minus inde agita, ſublataque mollibus ulnis
Interdum exerce leni corpuſcula motu,
Multa bilari ſimul ore jocans: neque clauſa reconde
Uſque domi in latebris, ſed apertas defer in auras,
Dum nullæ ſudo nebulæ, dum purior æther,
Et nitidum lenes ludunt per inane Favoni;

Ut

Ut cœlo et variâ gaviſus imagine rerum
Aſſueſcat luci puer, Authoremque potentem
Quà potis, admirans primis agnoſcat ab annis.

" Exerciſe their little bodies with a gentle " motion, talking to them at the ſame time " cheerfully. Neither keep them within doors " always, but carry them into the open air, " while the ſky is ſerene, while the air is clear, " and the zephyrs play around; that the little " one, rejoicing at the ſight of heaven and the " various objects around him, may be accuſtom- " ed to the light of day, and, ſtruck with admi- " ration, learn even from his infancy to venerate " the Almighty Maker."

Monſieur de St. Marthe, or Sammarthanus, as he is claſſically called, is a poet of the firſt claſs among the imitators of ancient elegance. He was born in 1536, and died in 1623.

Like the poets of his times, he has furniſhed a volume divided into *Lyrics*, *Elegies*, *Sylvæ*, *Epigrammata*, *et Cantica*, or Sacred Poems. The *Pædotrophia* is the beſt of his works; but he who has a taſte for modern Latin poetry will find much entertainment in every part of the volume.

Subjoined

Subjoined to the poems are three books of *Elogia* in proſe, which contain many entertaining biographical anecdotes of French literati, in a claſſical ſtyle, and a diction that, though it may perhaps be thought too florid, is yet engaging, becauſe it is animated.

CHAP. XI.

Miſcellaneous Literature—Of ſome Words and Paſſages in Biſhop Taylor.

I HAVE often maintained the neceſſity of underſtanding Latin and Greek in order to underſtand Engliſh completely: and I have heard the doctrine controverted, and attributed to a pedantical deſire of enhancing the value of the learned languages.

The authors of the laſt century afford many proofs of this neceſſity. I have accidentally noticed the following paſſages in the works of Biſhop Taylor, and they appear to me to be deciſive.

The Biſhop ſays, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, *The Arabian phyſicians endeavour to* ELEVATE *and leſſen the miraculous conception.*

A mere Engliſh reader will either not underſtand this at all, or underſtand it in ſuch a manner as to render it contradictory and nonſenſical. He will underſtand *elevate* in its preſent ſignification, to raiſe or exalt; whereas the author means quite the contrary, *to depreſs and to lower.* The Biſhop had the Latin *elevare* in his

his mind, which ſignifies to diminiſh, detract from, or extenuate. In ſome editions the word is altered by ſomebody who did not underſtand it, and inſtead of "*elevate*" is printed "*alleviate*".

In the ſame page he ſays, "St. John was "liſtened to by king and people, by doctors and "by IDIOTS, by Phariſees and Sadducees."

A mere Engliſh reader will not fail to underſtand fools by idiots, and will conclude that the Biſhop intended to ſay that St. John was attended to by wiſe men and fools. But as the Biſhop means by the context to honour St. John, it is impoſſible to conceive that he would ſay, as a compliment to him, that he was liſtened to by *idiots* in the ſynonimous ſenſe with *fools*. The truth is, that the Biſhop had the Greek IDIOTAI in view, and only meant that St. John was liſtened to by all ranks and conditions, by the learned and the unlearned; for IDIOTAI ſignifies the common people, the vulgar herd, as diſtinguiſhed from the learned, or people of diſtinction.

A great multitude of inſtances might be produced from the ſame learned author; but theſe happened to occur while I was reading his admirable little treatiſe inſerted in the fourth chapter and firſt book of the *Ductor Dubitantium*, entitled, An inſtance of moral Demonſtration, or a Conjugation

jugation of Probabilities, proving that the Religion of Jeſus Chriſt is from God. I adviſe my reader attentively to conſider that excellent piece, not only as a moſt ingenious compoſition, but as exhibiting in a ſtriking point many unanſwerable arguments in favour of Chriſtianity.

I beg leave to preſent him, as an inducement, with the following ſpecimen, on the internal evidence of the divinity of the religion of Jeſus Chriſt.

" For it is a doctrine perfective of human na-
" ture, that teaches us to love God, and to love
" one another, to hurt no man, and to do good
" to every man; it *propines* to us the nobleſt,
" the higheſt, and the braveſt pleaſures of the
" world; the joys of charity, the reſt of inno-
" cence, the peace of quiet ſpirits, the wealth
" of beneficence, and forbids us only to be
" beaſts and to be devils; it allows all that God
" and nature intended, and only reſtrains the
" excreſcencies of nature, and forbids us to take
" pleaſure in that which is the only entertain-
" ment of devils, in murders and revenges,
" malice, and ſpiteful words and actions; it
" permits corporal pleaſures where they can beſt
" miniſter to health and ſocieties, to converſa-
" tion of families, and honour of communities;

" it

" it teaches men to keep their words, that them-
" ſelves may be ſecured in all their juſt intereſts,
" and to do good to others that good may be
" done to them; it forbids biting one another,
" that we may not be devoured by one another;
" and commands obedience to ſuperiours, that
" we may not be ruined in confuſions; it com-
" bines governments, and confirms all good
" laws, and makes peace, and oppoſes and pre-
" vents wars where they are not juſt, and where
" they are not neceſſary. It is a religion that
" is life and ſpirit, not conſiſting in ceremonies
" and external amuſements, but in the ſervices
" of the heart, and the real fruit of lips and
" hands, that is, of good words and good deeds;
" it bids us to do that to God which is agreeable
" to his excellencies, that is, worſhip him with
" the beſt thing we have, and make all things
" elſe miniſter to it; it bids us to do that to our
" neighbour by which he may be better; it is
" the perfection of the natural law, and agree-
" able to our natural neceſſities, and promotes
" our natural ends and deſigns: it does not de-
" ſtroy reaſon, but inſtructs it in very many
" things, and complies with it in all; it hath in
" it both *heat* and *light*, and is not more effec-
" tual than it is beauteous; it promiſes every
" thing that we can deſire, and yet promiſes
" nothing but what it does effect; it proclaims

" war againſt all vices, and generally does com-
" mand every virtue; it teaches us with eaſe to
" mortifie thoſe affections which reaſon durſt
" ſcarce reprove, becauſe ſhe hath not ſtrength
" enough to conquer; and it does create in us
" thoſe virtues which reaſon of herſelf never
" knew, and, after they are known, could never
" approve ſufficiently. It is a doctrine in which
" nothing is ſuperfluous or burdenſome, nor yet
" is there any thing wanting which can procure
" happineſs to mankind, or by which God can
" be glorified: and if wiſdom, and mercy, and
" juſtice, and ſimplicity, and holineſs, and pu-
" rity, and meekneſs, and contentedneſs, and
" charity, be images of God and rays of divi-
" nity, then that doctrine in which all theſe
" ſhine ſo gloriouſly, and in which nothing elſe
" is ingredient, muſt needs be from God; and
" that all this is true in the doctrine of Jeſus,
" needs no other probation but the reading the
" words."

CHAP. XII.

The Abſurdity of ſome religious Prints to Books of Devotion—the Bible—and Milton.

THERE can be no doubt but that they who added prints to religious books intended to aſſiſt the reader in raiſing in his mind clear and ſtriking ideas of ſacred things; but the artiſts they employed have commonly been ſo injudicious as to render figures of a moſt ſerious and ſolemn kind objects of deriſion.

All graphical repreſentations of God the Father are to be diſapproved; for, inſtead of exalting our idea of the Deity, they *elevate* or lower it. In thinking of GOD, imagination forms an obſcure but grand image of a ſublime exiſtence, ΚΥΔΕΙ ΓΑΙΩΝ, and the heart adores it; but the hand of the artiſt at once diminiſhes its grandeur, and diveſts it of its glory. Think of the great God of heaven and earth drawn by a painter under the figure of a little old man with a long beard, ſitting in an elbow chair.

The Scripture introduces God ſpeaking or appearing with terrific majeſty. *The earth ſhook, the heavens alſo dropped at the preſence of the Lord.*

Tremble thou earth, at the preſence of the Lord, at the preſence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into a ſtanding water, the flint into a fountain of waters. It belongs to injudicious limners and ſculptors to render this *preſence* familiar. Hayman has one or two deſigns for Newton's Milton, in which God is introduced; in that which is prefixed to the ſixth book the Deity appears terrible, and the artiſt has ſhewn great ſkill; but yet he can never equal imagination, and therefore his beſt efforts will appear defective. Obſcurity aggrandizes images of celeſtial beings; once delineate them on paper, and render the idea clear and determinate, and you put an end to the awe of the beholder.

I can eaſily underſtand, and readily admire, as a ſtrong poetical figure, the touching of Iſaiah's hallowed lips with fire; but I cannot admire the engraver's repreſentation of an angel from heaven with a blackſmith's tongs burning the poor prophet's lips with a live coal.

Quodcunque oſtendis mihi ſic incredulus odi.

HOR.

There is a great analogy between poetry and painting, but yet poetry may repreſent many things with great vivacity and beauty which will not bear an exact delineation on paper or canvas.

The

The repreſentations of Satan in many ſerious books is ſo ridiculous, that one would almoſt imagine that the artiſt intended to laugh at the idea of ſuch a being. Who can bear ſome prints of demoniacs, where the poſſeſſed are exhibited vomiting up little black devils with cloven feet and long tails? If artiſts thought ſuch figures likely to excite or preſerve devotion, they muſt have been as weak as their admirers.

But as they have erred by familiarity, ſo alſo from ill-placed grandeur. The Nativity has ever been the favourite ſubject of painters. Truth required that they ſhould exhibit a ſtable; but, in order to dignify ſo mean a place, they uſually introduce a ſuperb and fluted column of the Grecian architecture. The ox, the aſs, and the manger, are faintly exhibited, but the grand pillar ſtrikes the ſpectator with ideas of ſumptuous magnificence. The birth of our Saviour in this humiliating place was intended to recommend humility by the force of example: but the painter comes, and, by a ſtrange metamorphoſis, converts the ſtable to a gorgeous palace. The artifice intended to raiſe veneration cauſes contempt, and the apparent falſehood is highly indecent when it obtrudes itſelf among the pages of a Holy Bible.

Few books have had a greater popularity than the works of Biſhop Taylor. Several of them are adorned with good plates by Faithorne; but others are of a ridiculous kind. The frontiſpiece to the *Rules of holy dying* cannot but excite mirth even in thoſe who do not habitually ſit in the ſeat of the ſcorner. On one ſide is the ſtatue of a clergyman in his canonicals, with the inſcription on the baſe, *Mercurius Chriſtianus*. In the clouds, oppoſite to him, is the figure of an old man, with a flag in one hand and a crown in the other, in a ſitting poſture, intended to repreſent Jeſus Chriſt. My reader will immediately ſee the abſurdity of introducing *Mercurius* in the ſame picture with our Saviour. On the other ſide is repreſented, in a moſt childiſh manner, hell and the devil. Here the figures are ſhockingly deformed; but they are calculated to ſtrike terror into none but children and thoſe who labour under the weakeſt ſuperſtition. The book is excellent, and has been read by the devout with great edification. It is to be regretted that it was deformed by ſuch a picture, which appears to be dictated by folly, and is ludicrous in the eyes of every ſenſible obſerver;

——poſſit duci quia fine iſtis. Hor.

The prints inſerted in the Common Prayer Books are of a kind which none but the ignorant

rant and vulgar can admire; and even they can receive no advantage from them. Such perſons may be diverted from devotion by them, inſtead of being guided to it, or animated in it. That entitled Jeſus tempted by the Devil, is almoſt as ludicrous as if it had come from Hogarth or Bunbury. The devil has a crown and ſceptre, a modern coat, apparently a pair of boots, and from his rump hangs a tail reſembling what is called a pig tail.

Endeavours to repreſent the Trinity by a triangle might be ſpared. The miraculous gift of tongues has been lowered in the reader's conception by the painter's art. In moſt ſculptures angels are too much familiarized to be revered.

In Sparke's Feaſts and Faſts there is an engraving to repreſent our Saviour's Paſſion. He is drawn praying in the garden, and ſuppoſed to be ſaying—*Father, if thou wilt, take this* CUP *from me*, &c. *And there appeared an angel from heaven comforting him.* The cup is in this place evidently a figurative expreſſion; but the artiſt repreſents an angel actually reaching out of the clouds a real cup in the form of a common drinking glaſs or rummer, and handing it in the attitude of a tavern-waiter with a glaſs of wine.

Nelſon's Feſtivals is an excellent book, and a great favourite with all the devout. I am concerned that it ſhould be diſgraced by two paltry plates, as frontiſpieces, which leſſen the reverence due to the whole ſubject. On the back ground of one are our Saviour and Satan on the mountain. Satan is repreſented with a tail, as uſual; and, if he had not wings, would preſent the idea of a cat ſtanding upon her hinder legs. It is improbable that any Chriſtian can be delighted or improved by ſuch figures; but it is certain that many may be offended and loſe that veneration for ſacred things which was favourable to their virtue and their peace.

By inſpecting popular books of devotion many other abſurd prints might eaſily be pointed out; but I mean not to encreaſe the ridicule. I wiſh all ſuch diſgraceful prints could be torn out and committed to the flames. What an idea muſt a Mahometan or a ſenſible Indian entertain of Chriſtianity, when he ſees ſuch ſilly figures in books ſanctioned by the moſt awful authority?

I know it will be ſaid that ſuch prints are intended only for weak brethren and ſiſters, for children, and old men and women in their dotage. Perhaps this is true; but others unavoidably ſee them, and they ſuggeſt a ridiculous idea on ſacred

cred ſubjects, not eaſily to be baniſhed when once admitted. He who has ſo far diveſted himſelf of natural awe as to laugh at what is venerable, will not, without a greater effort than moſt men are willing to make, raiſe in his mind a due degree of reſpect in the contemplation of heaven itſelf and its King.

The greateſt painters whom the world has yet ſeen have ſhewn that they were able to repreſent ſacred ſubjects, not only without lowering them, but with great addition to their inherent ſublimity. They choſe grand ſubjects, and their genius expanded to graſp the magnitude. Such, and ſuch only, may be imitated by the little artiſts who draw for common books of devotion; but I think it would be a good rule, never to repreſent either the God omnipotent, or the Evil Spirit, embodied. Painters ſhould not deviate into heatheniſm by confounding Jehovah with Jupiter, or Satan with Pluto. What mortal hand ſhall preſume to paint him in a mortal form and a material veſtment, who is diffuſed over all ſpace, and who cloaths himſelf with light as with a garment?

Let the limner practiſe an excellent rule ſuggeſted by Horace for the poet:

Quæ deſperat tractata niteſcere poſſe, relinquat.

CHAP. XIII.

The Happineſs of a Life of innocent Obſcurity—Inconveniencies attending Fame—Vanity—Ambition.

THE Choice of Hercules, and other pieces of a ſimilar tendency to be found among the ancient moraliſts, were a beautiful and efficacious mode of conveying a fine moral leſſon. They powerfully ſtimulated the minds of young perſons to neglect the blandiſhments of vice, and to follow virtue over the rugged ſteep that leads to glory. Hercules made an honourable choice; and his example was intended to fire the ſoul with emulative ardour.

Ambition is uſeful, as it calls for thoſe fine exertions which contribute to meliorate the condition of man, to improve all that Providence has allotted him, to perfect art, and adorn ſociety. Happy it is for the public that man is ſo formed as, for the ſake of fame, to relinquiſh eaſe, and devote his time, his health, his life, to labours, which, while they dignify himſelf, enrich, embelliſh, and aggrandize an empire.

And great is the pleaſure attendant on exertion, and ſweet the reward of applauding fellow-

creatures, when the exertion is virtuous and ſucceſsful.

Magnum iter intendo; ſed dat mihi gloria vires.

But there is a great deal of unſucceſsful exertion in purſuit of fame, and many, after ſowing in pain and labour, reap only a harveſt of diſappointment.

For the ſake of thoſe and of others who find not opportunities to diſtinguiſh themſelves, it is uſeful to ſuggeſt conſolatory topics, and ſuch as point out the pains and penalties of fame, and the eaſe of a life of inglorious retirement. Nor is it fair to attribute whatever is ſaid on this ſide of the queſtion to the ſame motive which induced the fox to exclaim, that the grapes were ſour. There are certainly a thouſand ſolid comforts to be enjoyed in a ſtate of obſcurity, which are bartered for the flattering diſtinction of popular applauſe.

He who is labouring to emerge from obſcurity, and whoſe mottoes are the ſpirited paſſages of Virgil,

——tentanda via eſt quâ me quoque poſſum
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora.—
——aliquid jamdudum invadere magnum
Mens agitat mihi NEC PLACIDA CONTENTA QUIETE EST.
VIRG.

immediately draws upon himſelf the watchful eyes of competition. His equals, over whom he attempts to riſe, ſhoot at him from the ground the ſhafts of envy, and thoſe who have already riſen, aſſail him from the turret with the miſſile weapons of jealouſy. The ſucceſs and final reſult of his attempts are doubtful; but the wounds and arrows of outrageous enemies are, in the mean time, ſenſibly felt, and often inflict on his peace a wound incurable.

When a man is once rendered conſpicuous, once become the ſubject of converſation, not only thoſe who envy his diſtinction, but thoſe who, from want of ſenſe or of knowledge, miſunderſtand his conduct, employ themſelves by ſecret influence or open enmity to reduce him to their own level.

The greateſt excellence is the moſt likely to be miſunderſtood; for few are qualified to be competent judges of ſingular pre-eminence. According to a juſt opinion, they who would form a judgment in learning, in arts, or in life, of an exalted degree of perfection, muſt themſelves poſſeſs it, and be able, while they give the criticiſm, to exhibit the example.

From the malice of envy, the miſtakes of ignorance, the levity of thoughtleſſneſs, it is impoſſible

poſſible that he who is lifted up and become a mark ſhould not frequently be wounded with a poiſoned arrow. If he has ſenſibility, his condition muſt be painful though it may be exalted. Like the traveller on a bleak hill, he muſt bide the pelting of the pitileſs ſtorm, and envy the ſhepherd in the vale his hovel and his cot.

The ſmalleſt ſpecks are moſt viſible in the whiteſt raiment. The common infirmities of human nature, ariſing from bodily ſickneſs or momentary ill-temper, are noticed in conſpicuous characters, and exaggerated by malicious ingenuity. They are remembered long, and perhaps never forgiven. In a common man who would have taken notice of ſuch peccadilloes as are handed to poſterity of Samuel Johnſon? The little infirmities of the man have given ſuch offence, as to prejudice many againſt the writer.

But he will not be troubled with externals only. He has within him a reſtleſs ſpirit, which ſuffers not his eyelids to cloſe in the ſoft hours when unambitious mortals enjoy the ſweeteſt ſlumber; while others taſte

——Ηδυμον υπνον.——
Μαλακω δεδμημενοι υπνω,——

of him it may be ſaid

——ου χρη πανυχιον ευδειν.

A ſtate

A ſtate of ſolicitude cannot but loſe many ſolid ſatisfactions, though it ſhould be allowed, as is indeed true, that the alternate excitation of hope and fear is attended with conſiderable delight, in conſequence of the exerciſe it affords.

It were eaſy to add on this ſubject an abundance of common-place remarks on ambition, glory, vanity, fame, eaſe, retirement; but this kind of common place, which every one allows to be true and ſolid, every one neglects, becauſe, like the ſun, it is ſelf-evident and familiar. I wiſh to draw my reflections from real obſervations on life.

Reſpicere exemplar vitæ et veras hinc ducere voces.

From real obſervation then I am able to pronounce that perſons who live in their families a regular and temperate life, performing their relative, ſocial, and religious duties, appear to enjoy more tranquillity and ſelf-poſſeſſion than the various tribes that are for ever ſtruggling to emerge from the level on which their birth and circumſtances have placed them. Ever reſtleſs, they taſte not the pleaſure of repoſe; and, as the deſires of ambition, like thoſe of avarice, encreaſe with poſſeſſion, they are ſtrangers to contentment as long as they live, that is, to the ſweeteſt ingredient of life.

When

When it is considered that, besides the certainty of incurring slander and misrepresentation, and feeling much uneasiness, and foregoing many most desirable comforts, the ambitious are also in danger of infamy where they expected fame, and contempt where they demanded honour, they will, it is to be hoped, repress their ardour, and learn to seek enjoyment in governing themselves and their families according to wisdom and justice. And let them not think that the public service is deserted by them; for when every man, according to the Scripture rule, studies to be quiet, and to mind his own business, the public will be better served than by the officious and pragmatical activity of the vain.

Though the favour and applause of men may gratify vanity, and promote pecuniary interest for a few years, yet of how little value will they appear at the close of life? Men know but little of each others real character and merit, and frequently err by undervaluing and overvaluing them. They have lavished fame and glory on the undeserving, and denied them to their greatest benefactors.

Milton had very little reputation as a poet while alive. And as to posthumous fame,

Si post fata venit gloria sera venit.

Churchhill

Churchhill had a thouſand times more popularity while he lived than Milton. He owed his popularity to politics. It intereſted the factions of the times. Milton's times were factious and turbulent enough; but he did not write political poetry. And violent partizans cared little for old Adam and Eve, and the bliſsful ſcenes of Eden's Garden.

Men are ſo apt to envy, to err, and to be ungrateful, that a wiſe man will take care, if poſſible, not to let the fabric of his happineſs reſt on a pillar ſo tottering as the peoples favour. He will endeavour to do good and to act reaſonably, and leave popularity to follow her own caprice, and not let it be ſaid of him

Palma negatum macrum, donata reducit opimum.
HOR.

It is the great buſineſs of Chriſtians to riſe above the world, to do right actions, not as men pleaſers, but unto God and their own conſciences; and happy they who quietly walk in their pilgrimage through this world through the vale of peace, neither purſuing fame, nor declining it when it comes as the temporal reward of goodneſs, but looking for applauſe of Him who ſeeth the heart, and whoſe approbation is the only true glory.

But

But even here man muſt be on his guard againſt vain-glory; for many have appeared to be religious, and to deſpiſe glory, who were anxiouſly ſeeking it, deceiving themſelves and others. *Sæpe homo*, ſays St. Auſtin, *de vano gloriæ contemptu, vaniùs gloriatur.*

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CHAP. I.

Religious Subjects neglected from Prejudice—their Importance.—They are Moral Philoſophy under a ſtronger Sanction.

I HOPE my readers will not think that I deviate into an unintereſting ſubject, when, in the courſe of the Winter Evenings, I am ſometimes led to conſider that which is the buſineſs of every man, and far more important than the fineſt diſquiſitions in Science, Ethics, Arts, and the Belles Lettres.

————id, quod
Æquè pauperibus prodeſt, locupletibus æquè,
Æquè, neglectum, pueris, ſenibuſque nocebit.

The preſent ſeaſon of Chriſtmas naturally leads to the contemplation of religion. Indeed a ſubject in which all men are at all times deeply concerned, can never be unſeaſonable.

I am ſorry to obſerve, that ſuch ſubjects ſhould be conſidered as dull. But I was ſurpriſed a little

little while ago, on mentioning my deſign to touch on religious topics, to hear from a ſenſible man, that he wiſhed I would not, as I might depend upon it, my book would be more generally acceptable if religious topics were entirely excluded. "If you write a religious book, he ſaid, you muſt expect few readers but old women with their ſpectacles; you will ſtand no chance of getting rid of the copies, unleſs the Societies for promoting religious knowledge, and for the propagation of the Goſpel, ſhould think proper to give them away."

This prejudice againſt religious books, which I fear is too prevalent among thoſe who call themſelves men of pleaſure, gaiety, and faſhion, is very unfortunate, as it tends to cut off ſome of the beſt opportunities of deriving a knowledge of that which through ignorance alone they deſpiſe.

Indeed, it muſt be acknowledged, that in the great abundance of religious books for which this country is remarkable, there are many which rather injure the cauſe which they were written to advance. They were perhaps only written for a particular ſect or perſuaſion, and when they fall into the hands of thoſe who are not attached to any party, but judge from their own reaſon and unbiaſſed ſentiments, they excite ideas unfavourable

vourable to religion in general. A poor ſtyle, wretched arguments, cant, hypocriſy, fanaticiſm, will give a diſguſt to the ſober-minded, and much more to thoſe who are little inclined to ſerious ideas, however well recommended by a poliſhed ſtyle, and a diſpaſſionate appeal to reaſon.

Such books may perhaps produce a good effect among thoſe claſſes for whom they were intended, though they appear to perſons of education, replete with groſs abſurdity. They are not therefore to be utterly deſpiſed, though they may be neglected; and it is unfair and ill judged to form an idea of all religion and all religious treatiſes from the zealous but poor attempts of illiterate enthuſiaſts. It is like forming a judgment of poetry from the works of Tom D'Urfey. Though, be it always remembered, that the diſciples were poor fiſhermen, that religion may be underſtood without critical erudition; and that many a good man without learning has comprehended the vital and eſſential parts of religion better than the moſt learned profeſſor of theology in the moſt celebrated univerſity. While the one was inſpecting dictionaries, the other was examining his own heart; while the one was toiling at languages, the other was engaged in labours of love.

There

There are in the Engliſh language great numbers of religious books which cannot fall under the cenſure of abſurdity, but are at once rational and beautiful. I wiſh my reader to enter on the ſtudy of religion by reading them, and he will afterwards reliſh real piety wherever he finds it, even though it ſhould appear in a ſtyle of rude ſimplicity.

But many faſhionable freethinkers are much converſant in polite and claſſical authors, and to paſs from them to ſome of the ſimple works of mere devotees is too violent a tranſition. It is for that reaſon that I recommend to them the ſermons of the beſt writers; and hope they will not be ſo far prejudiced againſt them as to condemn them unexamined.

After a taſte ſhall have been formed for religious ſubjects from the works of Addiſon, Hooker, Hammond, Taylor, Grotius, Biſhop Bull, Dr. Lardner, Locke, Clarke, and the ſermon writers of the firſt claſs, the mind will learn to take a pleaſure in thoſe books of humble piety where the excellence of the thoughts and doctrines muſt ſhine by its own luſtre, unadorned with the graces of language.

It is natural to ſuppoſe, that human enquiry will be moſt willingly converſant on the moſt important

ant

ant ſubjects. Life, death, and immortality, have in them an inherent value, in compariſon with which all other things appear like duſt in the balance. There are conſequently more books, I believe, in divinity than in any other department.

But can I, after ſo many and ſo valuable labours, add any thing uſeful? I fear not; yet as religion is a ſubject that muſt frequently be conſidered by all who think with ſerioufneſs, I have alſo frequently conſidered it, and ſhall beg leave to write my thoughts of it with that humility which becomes all men, and which perhaps may be particularly required in me.

I am ſtruck with awe at the very ſubject. A poor frail mortal ſits down to examine the works and words of his omnipotent Maker. If he ſhould miſtake in his concluſions, he may offend his God, and lead others into dangerous temptation.

But he is encouraged by example. He is encouraged by the authority which commiſſions many to expound the Scriptures, and to teach the people. And if errors are errors of judgment only, unaccompanied with preſumption, there is every reaſon to believe them venial.

The

The prejudices againſt religious writings are highly unreaſonable; for what is religion but moral philoſophy under a higher ſanction than the beſt human reaſon could give it; what but the beſt efforts of human reaſon, controlled and directed by the will of God?

And can it be illiberal and narrow, or in any reſpect unworthy the moſt exalted of the human race, to ſtudy this will of God? to trace the beams of celeſtial light wherever the leaſt glimmering appears in this darkling vale.

The ſtudy of divinity, or Chriſtian philoſophy, is a ſublime employment of our faculties worthy of the greateſt philoſophers. What are mathematics, languages, arts, to the contemplation of the great fountain of all knowledge, of all beauty, of all excellence, the Father of Lights?

To neglect the topics of religion in my Winter Evenings would, I think, be a culpable omiſſion; and I hope few readers are ſo little attentive to their chief concern as to think whatever is ſaid on that ſubject unimportant.

After ſo much has been written in this country by the heroes of Chriſtianity, I can indeed hope

hope to add but little; but if I only turn the attention of a few to the ſubject, the attempt will not be uſeleſs; and what pleaſure ariſing from polite letters and claſſical knowledge can equal that of ſeeking for oneſelf, and ſhewing to others, the THINGS THAT BELONG UNTO PEACE?

CHAP. II.

The parochial Prieſt—Dr. Burton's Latin Poem entitled Sacerdos Paræcialis ruſticus—Of the Government of a Pariſh—The Neceſſity in the preſent Age of being aſſiſted by the opulent Pariſhioners, in accompliſhing a Reformation of Manners.

IN the eſtimation of reaſon few, if any, employments are more honourable than that of the paſtor of a pariſh, the true Ποιμην Λαων. It is the buſineſs of his life to diffuſe happineſs and knowledge. His own wants and thoſe of his family require ſome regard to pecuniary emolument, and juſtify an endeavour to obtain a competency; but his attention to lucre is but ſecondary and ſubordinate. His profeſſional employment, and the purpoſe of his life, is the communication of happineſs and knowledge: a moſt honourable profeſſion, to be ſeeking wiſdom at the fountain, and to be diſpenſing it to all who aſk for it.

I am ſpeaking of the profeſſion, not of the profeſſors. I am aware that many a ſatirical tongue will be ready to detract from them, when compared to the profeſſion in theory, and to ex-

aggerate thoſe human frailties in them which in others they would palliate. But when I deſcend from the profeſſion to the profeſſors, I think I may affirm, that in no rank of ſociety are more reſpectable members to be found than in the clerical. They ought, it will be ſaid, to be ſuperior in learning and virtue to others, as the maſter ſhould excel his ſcholars, and as their ſtudies and education tend to the advancement of human excellence to its higheſt perfection. Human frailty excepted, they have been, and often are, what they ought to be in the eye of reaſonable expectation. It is not poſſible to ſatisfy the demands of fanaticiſm, puritaniſm, and enthuſiaſm.

Dr. John Burton ſeems to have viewed the character of a pariſh-prieſt with ſingular admiration. He frequently ſpeaks of it with a degree of rapture. The following paſſage from his *Sacerdos Paræcialis* is pleaſing.

O felix ſtudii, qui non ingloria ruris
Otia tutus agit, procul ambitione metuque!
Qui recolens quicquid dignum ſapiente bonoque
Providus æternæ meditatur ſeria vitæ
Gaudia deſpiciens peritura; Deoque vocanti,
Cujus ſacra gerit, magno lætatus honore,
Impendit curas, animamque relinquit in aſtris.
Non illum potuit Syren, damnoſa voluptas,
Flectere, non miſeros agitans diſcordia cives,

Nec maleſuadus honos, nec lucri prava cupido;
Sed pietas, cœlumque fides amplexa, remotum
Ad majora vocat; fortunam dona ferentem
Subjiciens pedibus rigidique pericula fati,
Atque alio patriam monſtrans ſub ſole jacentem.
Felix qui, latè turbantibus æquora ventis,
Civiles tuta proſpectat ab arce tumultus,
Immunis culpæ, ſimul immuniſque pericli
Cætera ſecurus ſancto vacat uſque labori
Sedulus et populo prodeſſe Deoque placere.

He proceeds to exemplify the character by the inſtances of Bernard Gilpin, Hooker, Herbert, and Hales. A long liſt might be added of men, of whom it is doubtful whether they had not acquired a participation of angelic perfection even in this low abode. They ſeem to have been ſent by Providence as models of excellence, to ſhew at what height human nature can arrive by its virtuous efforts, aſſiſted with divine grace, notwithſtanding its weakneſs and corruption.

Many no leſs exemplary than theſe have died unknown,

——————caruerunt quia vate ſacro.——

Multitudes who lived in the practice of every Chriſtian virtue, and died in the faith, truly ſaints, if any mortal can poſſeſs that title, now ſleep in peace, with nothing over their graves but the green-ſwerd. In the eſtimation of heaven, it is

probable, that they were deemed more worthy of a mauſoleum than kings and conquerors.

As a tree is known by its fruits, let Chriſtianity be tried by the virtuous men it has produced. I do not think that the moſt celebrated philoſophers among the heathens have equalled the virtue of many pariſh-prieſts, who ſpent their days in the uniform practice of piety and benevolence, of many whoſe lives are accurately recorded, and of thouſands more who lived and died in the obſcurity which they loved, in the ſtraw-rooft vicarage of ſome ſequeſtered hamlet.

But objectors are inclined to complain that the labours of the pariſh-prieſt are not often attended with any remarkable effect; that pariſhes continue profligate notwithſtanding the preaching and example of the moſt pious and learned incumbent. They may, it is true, be profligate notwithſtanding theſe advantages; but is it not reaſonable to believe that they would be more profligate without them?

But that the clergy may poſſeſs all that weight which their characters, their inſtructions, and their ſervices entitle them to, it is neceſſary that the richer and higher orders in their pariſhes ſhould ſet an example of paying them reſpect, and cooperate with them in ſecuring, as far as is poſſible, a regular and decent obſervation of the Lord's Day.

The great requiſite is, to give the clergyman of the pariſh AUTHORITY. But the eſquire and juſtice of peace are often jealous of his influence, and, inſtead of augmenting, are uſually ready to diminiſh his power by vexatious oppoſition. They form a party to carry every point againſt him in the veſtry; little conſidering, that, in lowering the *perſona eccleſiæ*, or the parſon, they contribute to deſtroy the ſubordination of ſociety, and to leſſen themſelves in the eyes of their inferiors. The clergy and gentry ſhould mutually and cordially aſſiſt each other in promoting good morals, good order, and every thing conducive to ſocial peace and to humble induſtry.

Theſe are not times in which eccleſiaſtics unaſſiſted by the laity can do much towards the reformation of the public. They were once viewed with a reverence which ſecured obedience to their exhortations; but this was before the general prevalence of infidelity. The loweſt of the vulgar have now learned to talk of the national religion as a mode of ſuperſtition, and to deſpiſe its miniſters, eſpecially when a demand is made on their property. I have ſeen low perſons who revenged the exaction of tythes, not only on the rectors and vicars, but on the Church, on the Chriſtian religion, and on the Bible.

Thoſe among the inferior ranks, who ſtill retain a reverence for religion, are too often ſeduced by methodiſts from the pariſh church, and endeavour to evince their zeal and attachment to their ſelf-appointed paſtors, by profeſſing a contempt, if not a hatred, for the regular miniſter of the pariſh. His endeavour to preſerve the dignity of his order is ſtigmatized as pride, his claim of his juſt dues as avarice, his rational ſtyle of preaching as the cold and languid performance of one who is labouring for hire in an employment which he diſlikes.

Theſe opinions are diſſeminated with induſtry, and thus the lower part of the pariſh are ſoon divided into two parts, equally inclined to obſtruct the beneficial operations of the miniſter, the ſceptical and profligate on the one hand, and the enthuſiaſtic on the other; unleſs therefore the better ſort unite with him, and give him that power which is neceſſary to accompliſh the purpoſes of his profeſſion, he is in danger of being ſet at nought, and all his endeavours may be rendered ineffectual.

A clergyman has often a difficult part to act. The times are ſuch, that all the richer and higher people of his pariſh affect to be people of faſhion. They bring into the village the manners and amuſements

amuſements of the metropolis. If, on one hand, he refuſes to join in them, he is an unwelcome viſitor among the rich; and if, on the other, he is ſeen too much engaged by them, he is deſpiſed by the poor.

The rich ſhould allow him to be ſingular and reſerved, without thinking him diſagreeable or unfaſhionable. He is a public character, and ſtands connected with all the pariſh, of whatever degree, in a very intimate and important relation. It is his duty to ſerve both rich and poor, and in making himſelf agreeable to one, he muſt not ſo far forget the other as to neglect his duty and to give offence. But nothing in clergymen gives greater offence to the poor than *avoir du monde*.

Whether he may poſſeſs the graceful and polite accompliſhments or not, the rich pariſhioners ſhould make it a point to ſupport him with their countenance, in all the duties of his office. This ſupport of the richer pariſhioners appears to me to be the principal thing wanted to render the clergy efficient in promoting the great purpoſes of their inſtitution.

CHAP. III.

Learning—Some Inconveniencies attending the preſent Purſuit of it unknown to former Ages—Multitude of Books.

WHILE the objects of learning are encreaſed, the time to be ſpent in purſuit of it, according to the modes of modern life, is greatly contracted. Every year produces ſome valuable work in ſome department of ſcience or polite letters, and the accompliſhed ſcholar is expected, and cannot but wiſh to give it ſome attention. The art of printing has multiplied books to ſuch a degree, that it is a vain attempt either to collect or to read all that is excellent, much more all that has been publiſhed. It becomes neceſſary, therefore, to read in the claſſical ſenſe of the word, LEGERE, that is, to *pick out*, to ſelect the moſt valuable and worthieſt objects, not only the beſt parts of books, but, previouſly to that ſelection, to chuſe out of an infinite number, the beſt books, or at leaſt thoſe which are beſt adapted to our particular purſuit or employment in life. Without this care there is danger of confuſion and diſtraction, of a vain labour, and of that poverty which ariſes from ſuperfluity.

Inopem me copia fecit.

The

The ſurface of the globe becomes every day more known, enlarges the field of modern hiſtory, geography, botany, and furniſhes new opportunities for the ſtudy of human nature. At the revival of learning, voyages and travels conſtituted a very ſmall part of the ſcholar's and philoſopher's library; but at preſent, in England only, the books of this claſs are ſufficiently numerous to fill a large muſæum. He who would underſtand human nature muſt inſpect them, and he will alſo find it neceſſary to have recourſe to the Dutch and the French travellers. A man might find employment for his life in reading itineraries alone.

The late great improvements in ſcience have multiplied books neceſſary to be read by the general ſcholar to a wonderful extent. The volumes of ſcientifical and literary ſocieties or academies are infinite. The mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms have been accurately examined, and the reſult brought to public view, in crowded and bulky tomes. The minuteſt productions of nature have been deſcribed with prolixity; from the hyſſop on the wall to the cedar of Lebanon, from the atom to the mountain, from the mite to man, the whale and the elephant.

The ſtudy of antiquities has added greatly to the number of books. Politics, hiſtory, and law, have crowded the library.

The field of divinity has been moſt induſtriouſly cultivated, and the harveſt has been rich. The age of Methuſalem would be too ſhort to read all the theological works of Engliſh divines; to which muſt be added the excellent productions of France, Holland, and other neighbouring nations. Biblical learning alone, ſo pregnant is the ſacred volume, would occupy a long life, excluſively of all attention to practical theology.

Moral philoſophy, both ſyſtematical and miſcellaneous, is ſo far extended, that if it is all neceſſary to the conduct of life, every man muſt die without knowing how to live; for the longeſt life would not afford opportunities for it's ſtudy.

Philology and criticiſm have appeared in books which equal, or exceed in number and ſize, all the original works which it was their prime intention to elucidate.

A ſpecies of books, unknown to the antients, and ſuch as are found to attract more readers than

than any others, has ariſen in the laſt century; I mean romances and fictitious hiſtories of private and familiar life, under the name of Novels.

Add to all this a vaſt quantity of poetry or verſe of all kinds, and on all ſubjects; add tragedies and comedies; add pamphlets in all their variety, fugitive papers, publications of diurnal intelligence, and the ſum becomes ſo great as to lead the ſtudent to a degree of deſpair.

I have already ſaid, that not only the work to be done has encreaſed upon us, but the time of doing it has decreaſed, according to the modes of living which now prevail.

Early riſing is not in vogue. Breakfaſt, with all the apparatus of tea-drinking, occupies a long time. The hair muſt be dreſſed with taſte, or the ſtudent will find his learning will not give him admiſſion into the company of people of condition and faſhion, nor indeed into any company.

The newſpapers muſt be read; elſe converſation may loſe one of its moſt abundant ſources. The coffee-houſe perhaps claims an hour. Morning calls muſt be made, and cards left in key-holes or with ſervants, or friendſhip and patronage may be irrecoverably loſt. A

morning walk or ride will conduce to an appetite, and the perſon muſt be dreſſed from head to foot before a genteel ſtudent can think of meeting company at dinner. Very little time, it is evident, can be found in the midſt of all theſe neceſſary occupations for poring over folios. To neglect any of them for his book a man may be in danger of being called an odd fellow, and diſmiſſed to Coventry.

But the morning loſs, you will ſay, may be recovered by the diligence of the afternoon. Impoſſible; for the hour of dining is the ſame which in the days of that polite ſcholar and fine gentleman, Sir Philip Sydney, uſed to be the ſupper time: and convivial pleaſures are ſo great, as to render him who ſhould relinquiſh them for muſty books obnoxious to the imputation of an aſcetic or a bookworm. Indeed the mind is unfit for contemplation after a full meal and a generous glaſs. Various amuſements intervene to employ the time till the hour of repoſe cloſes the ſeaſon both of action and contemplation.

While ſo much is to be done and ſo little is the time, how can we expect to find many profoundly learned? And yet there is as much pretenſion to learning, and as much volubility upon all ſubjects of ſcience as could be expected

in

in the moſt erudite age. How is this phænomenon accounted for?

In the firſt place, *ſuperficial learning*, quite enough to qualify talkers, and to ſatisfy common hearers, is eaſily picked up by reading the newſpapers, and periodical pamphlets, in which little ſcraps are dealt out, like ſmall wares at a retail ſhop for the convenience of the poor, who, though they have no ſtore-room, make ſhift to live from hand to mouth, and hide their poverty.

In the next and the principal place, a reliance ON GENIUS, as it is called, without application, gives a boldneſs of utterance and aſſertion, which often ſets off baſe metal with the glitter of gold. Never was an age when there were ſo many pretenders TO GENIUS. The great art is, under the confidence of genius, to make the moſt advantageous diſplay of the little learning you have, to diſparage what you have not, to put a good face upon defect, and ſupply weakneſs and want of real courage by a noiſy confidence and boiſterous pretenſion to *native* powers, above the reach of application. It is not uncommon to throw contempt upon all who ſhew, by their willingneſs to labour in purſuit of knowledge, a perſuaſion that, though a man may be born with powers to acquire knowledge, yet he is not

not born with knowledge acquired, with innate ſcience, hiſtory, philoſophy, and languages.

Knowledge may be acquired by one man ſooner than by another, and in much greater abundance; but it muſt be acquired by application, ſince it is neither innate, nor can be mechanically infuſed.

And ſince the field of knowledge is enlarged, and the time to be ſpent in cultivating it contracted, it is requiſite that the ſtudent ſhould ſelect a little part of the field only for cultivation, and by huſbanding his time, ſo as to dig and manure it well, to carry home a good crop of corn, while others are contented with ſpontaneous weeds, leaves, thorns, thiſtles, chaff, and underwood.

Let him enjoy the proſpect of the fine country around as far as the horizon extends; but let him be ſatisfied with cultivating a little *ferme ornèe* well laid-out, prettily diverſified, and within a moderate encloſure.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Benevolence of the Age.

Sui memores alios fecêre.

IF any one ſhould be diſpoſed to cenſure with uncharitable ſeverity the vicious manners of the preſent age, I ſhould wiſh to lead him through the environs of London, and point out to him the modern palaces erected for the poor and the afflicted of all denominations. Theſe, I would ſay, are the trophies of Chriſtianity; and theſe, we are taught to hope, ſhall cover a multitude of ſins, and plead powerfully in favour of tranſgreſſors at the mercy-ſeat of the Moſt High.

I was walking one fine morning in St. George's Fields, when the ſun ſhone delightfully, and gilded the ſpires of the numerous churches in my view, and ſeemed to ſmile on the windows of the various public edifices devoted to charity around me; when I could not help exclaiming, Surely the great Father of us all, when he looks down with indignation on the crying ſins of yon great city, will turn with complacency to theſe monuments of charity, and blot out whole pages from the tremendous volume, where he records the offences of his favourite creature.

I went

I went on muſing on the multitude of charitable inſtitutions by which this country is honourably diſtinguiſhed; and, though former times have many illuſtrious examples of munificence to produce, yet I congratulated myſelf on being born in an age in which Chriſtian charity never ſhone with greater luſtre.

I confined myſelf, amidſt the multitude of noble examples which occurred, to thoſe which have appeared within a few years, and which have been ſeen by the race of mortals now alive.

One of the firſt which was ſuggeſted to my memory was that of Mr. Hetherington. I do not recollect that any particular proviſion had been made for the neceſſitous blind, labouring under the additional burden of old age; though from the dictates of common ſenſe and the example of our bleſſed Saviour, it might obviouſly have been concluded, that the blind are in a peculiar manner objects of Chriſtian charity.

Mr. Hetherington has provided comfort for fifty of theſe objects in perpetual ſucceſſion, by an annuity of ten pounds a year each, during the remainder of their dark pilgrimage. He ſet a noble and almoſt ſingular example by beſtowing his benefaction while he was yet alive, and the

example

example has been moſt honourably followed by Mr. Coventry, who has made a ſimilar proviſion for thirty more, with a like exemplary bounty.

He again has been imitated by a benefactor, who, chuſing to do good clandeſtinely, has alleviated the misfortune of an additional thirty, and left it to heaven only to record his name.

At the very mention of Jonas Hanway, all that is benevolent riſes to the recollection. The marine ſociety has two effects ſo important, the providing for the poor vagabond, and the raiſing of a nurſery of ſeamen, that it is no wonder the name of Hanway, to whom it owes its greateſt obligations, is held in high rank among the benefactors to this country.

Who ever ventured to appear the public advocate of the chimney-ſweeper but Jonas Hanway? The poor infant of five or ſix years old, without ſhoes or ſtockings, almoſt naked, almoſt ſtarved, driven up the narrow flue of a high chimney, driven by the menaces and ſcourges of an imperious maſter, and ſometimes terrified with flames! Think of this, ye mothers who careſs your infants in your laps—think of it, and whenever you meet the poor ſooty babes,

babes, drop a pittance in their hands, and they ſhall ſmile in gratitude, and ſeek a ſolace of their woe in the purchaſe of an apple or a cake; and, at the ſame time, exert your intereſt and abilities, like Jonas Hanway, in preventing the employment of babes in a work under which the hardened veteran might ſink with pain, terror, and fatigue. There was indeed no ſpecies of miſery which this indefatigable philanthropiſt did not endeavour to relieve. Happy, had his abilities as a writer equalled his zeal as a man. But his excellent plans were ſometimes neglected, or contemned, through a deficiency of proper eloquence to recommend them. But for what he intended, and what he performed, his name ſhall be handed down to late poſterity, while his buſt ſtands erected by gratitude among the tombs of kings, and greater than kings, thoſe who, though private perſons, enlightened the underſtanding and alleviated the miſeries of their fellow creatures.

Of Mr. Howard's heroic philanthropy the world wants no monument more honourable than the eager plaudits of his own countrymen. By a ſtrange forgetfulneſs, the ſtate of priſons in this and other countries was deplorably neglected, and a degree of puniſhment was inflicted by the cold, the dampneſs, the filthineſs, the wretched diet and accommodation, and the conſequent diſeaſes

diſeaſes of the dungeon, far greater than the moſt rigorous ſeverity of the moſt ſanguinary laws ever intended. Mr. Howard, by viſiting the priſons, by ſuggeſting improvements in them, by cauſing a ſenſe of ſhame in the conductors of them, and by raiſing a general attention to the ſubject, has already diffuſed a gleam of comfort in the dark manſion, where miſery unutterable ſat and pined unpitied in hopeleſs agony. Loaded with chains, confined with iron bars and maſſey walls, the guiltleſs priſoner heaved his ſighs, and poured his tears, and liſtened to the clock which once called him to cheerful induſtry, but which now only reminded him of the ſlow progreſs of the tardy hour. Every one breathed contagion, and whether he deſerved death or not for his crime, he was likely to incur it in the loathſome priſon with all the aggravation of lingering languor. Great as was his miſery, few gave themſelves the trouble to notice it. Many feared infection if they approached to examine, and many, diſguſted with the infamy of the guilty, ſcarcely acknowledged that the priſoner deſerved compaſſion. But Mr. Howard, regardleſs of eaſe and life, incurred every danger, and quite forgot *their failings in their woe.*

But it is unneceſſary to dwell on Mr. Howard's praiſe. Fortunately the public have taken it up; and there is ſome danger leſt panegyric ſhould

ſhould be carried to an exceſs which fruſtrates its own intent, by creating a ſenſe of ſatiety.

The Society for the relief of Priſoners confined for Small Debts deſerves to participate Mr. Howard's fame.

Many were the prejudices formed againſt the ſociety inſtituted for the recovery of drowned perſons; but let any one place himſelf a moment in the ſituation of a parent ſuddenly bereaved of his child, and, if he is not unfeeling in his nature, he will want no argument to induce him to give it every encouragement. Doubts were once entertained of its ſucceſs, but they may be now removed by ocular demonſtration. It is indeed a moſt affecting ſight to behold thoſe who were ſnatched from the jaws of death walking on the public days in ſolemn proceſſion, and paying a grateful obedience to their benefactors.

The Diſpenſaries eſtabliſhed, and liberally ſupported in various parts of the metropolis, are an additional proof of the indefatigable beneficence of the preſent age.

But I know many will be ready to detract from the inſtitutors and benefactors, and to ſay, that theſe plauſible charities are begun and ſupported by many who mean no more than to gratify

tify their vanity, or promote their intereſt. There is reaſon to ſuſpect that this may, in ſome inſtances, be true, but not in all; and while ſo much good is produced, it is narrow and invidious to derogate from the promotem of it, by attributing their activity to ſelfiſh incitements.

What can be ſaid of the thouſands of unambitious and diſintereſted perſons who eagerly crowd to preſent their guineas in contribution to every uſeful mode of beneficence for which their aſſiſtance is publicly ſolicited? It would be no leſs unreaſonable than mean to attribute their bounty to vanity, or any other ſiniſter conſideration. To avoid the very ſuſpicion, many give moſt ample donations and conceal their names; but thoſe who do not, ought in candour to be ſuppoſed deſirous of diffuſing the influence of their example and authority, rather than of ſeeking the applauſe of the world, and the reputation of generoſity.

Of the various hoſpitals which ſurround the great city, and form a better defence for it than the ſtrongeſt fortification, I have ſaid nothing, becauſe they were chiefly founded in preceding times; and I wiſhed on the preſent occaſion to be confined to recent inſtances, and to ſuch as have

have occurred within the memory of the rising generation.

From all of them I am led to conclude, that the benevolent virtues are by no means diminished among us, but that they flourish more and more under the guidance of judgment and experience; and may they still flourish, and may every one be anxious to have a share in them, that he may have something to veil the multitude of his transgressions when he shall be summoned to give up his account at the tribunal of an omniscient and almighty judge.

CHAP. V.

Of Sunday Schools.

IN this free country a ſtrict plan of police cannot eaſily be eſtabliſhed and carried into complete execution. Preventive meaſures and ſummary proceedings would often infringe that liberty which is an Engliſhman's glory. The conſequence is, that capital puniſhments are more frequent here than in abſolute governments.

But capital puniſhments, though ſhocking in their nature, and conducted ſo as to ſtrike terror, are yet found experimentally inſufficient to promote a general reformation. They cut down the tree that bears evil fruit; but it would be a more ſucceſsful method to graft the ſtock with a more generous cion. If it is poſſible to meliorate the root, the tree that would otherwiſe have only cumbered the ground, will in time mature its beautiful bloſſoms to cluſters of fruit equally uſeful and delicious.

But in what manner ſhall the reformation begin? Old offenders may be ſometimes reſtrained by fear, but ſeldom admit an entire renovation.

Therefore

Therefore the experiment muſt chiefly be made on the young.

The children of the rich are uſually educated with conſiderable expence. Whether the methods in which they are trained are the beſt that could be contrived or not, it is certain that the rich cannot, from their ſtate of independence, fall under the regulation of the charitable. Poor children then are the objects on which charity muſt exert herſelf in her endeavours to effect a national reform.

The majority of every nation muſt of neceſſity conſiſt of the poor: and if the majority can be improved, there is great reaſon to ſuppoſe that many in the minority will receive benefit from the example; and that, upon the whole, ſo much good will be produced as may be ſaid to meliorate the morals of the whole people.

Charity-ſchools were eſtabliſhed with this laudable intention; and, though many plauſible objections have been made to them, yet there is reaſon to think that, as far as they extended, they contributed conſiderably to the accompliſhment of their original purpoſe. But though they are numerous, they are by no means univerſal;

and, on their preſent plan, they cannot poſſibly comprehend all the poor children of a populous pariſh.

To ſupply their defects, and to ſerve a thouſand deſirable purpoſes, Mr. Raikes of Glouceſter has inſtituted Sunday Schools. To the honour of the age, his example has been eagerly followed. The plan is at preſent only in its infancy. Time and experience can alone ſhew, in a full and infallible light, its real utility. It is proper, however, to render it an object of general attention, that it may have the advantage of a fair trial.

They who know how much time is neceſſary for the inſtruction of children, will entertain doubts whether an hour or two, after an intermiſſion of ſix days, will be ſufficient for any great purpoſe, and whether the little that is then learned will not be obliterated from the memory by the natural effect of time, and the intervention of a variety of objects which have no relation to the Sunday's leſſon. Boys who go to ſchool ſpend ſeven or eight hours every day in the week, for a year or two, before they learn to read with competent facility.

This cannot be denied; but then it ſhould be conſidered that the ſuperintendant may ſet a ſhort taſk to be learned in the courſe of the week, ſuch as the child can attend to with advantage under the eye of the parents, who, though they ſhould not be able to read, may yet, by their authority, take care that the child looks into its book during half an hour every evening when the daily labour is concluded. Without the co-operation of parental authority I fear little will be done; with it, there is a chance that ſomething may; and the parents themſelves may derive ſome benefit, by virtuouſly endeavouring, according to the beſt of their power, to promote their childrens improvement. If the parents can read, and are duly deſirous of ſerving their children, they may inſtruct them according to the method preſcribed by the teacher, and the Sunday attendance may be conſidered as a probationary exerciſe or examination.

But if the child ſhould not learn to read, it may yet learn ſomething more valuable. It may learn the principles of religion and moral honeſty. It may learn to ſay proper prayers, the Lord's prayer, the Creed, and the Catechiſm by rote and frequent repetition; and they who know the extreme ignorance of children in the loweſt rank will not deem theſe contemptible acquiſitions.

They

They are ſuch as may have a good effect on the whole lives of the labouring part of mankind, ſave them from many errors and crimes, and at the ſame time, conduce to promote a ſpirit of piety and a due degree of ſubmiſſive obedience.

Chriſtianity may certainly be underſtood to all the purpoſes of ſalvation without learning; and perhaps the honeſt labourer, who receives the plain inſtruction of the Sunday ſchoolmaſter, and treaſures it in his heart, and acts up to the little knowledge he poſſeſſes with firm faith and true humility, is a better Chriſtian than the learned theologiſt who diſputes with all the pride of ſyllogiſtic ſkill in the ſchools of divinity. Compare the child who has learned only this little to the mere vagabond, or the wretched pickpocket in London ſtreets, who ſcarcely ever heard the name of God or Jeſus Chriſt but in an oath or execration, who imbibes the arts of villainy from his cradle, and dies at the gibbet at eighteen.

Suppoſing children ſhould learn nothing, in conſequence of the ſhortneſs of the time devoted to inſtruction and the diſtant intervals of it, yet it is certain, that during thoſe hours which are the moſt dangerous in the week they are kept from bad practices, and the contagion of bad examples. If they were not confined and under

the maſter's eye, they would be in the ſtreets, in the purlieus of the town, in the church-yard, gaming for halfpence, quarrelling, fighting, and practiſing every vice of which their age is capable and which opportunities allow.

Perhaps when children are induſtriouſly and ſoberly brought up by their parents, and employed in ſedentary manufactories during the whole week, it may be injurious to health, and quite unneceſſary, to confine and employ them on the day which God intended for their reſt and refreſhment. It is cruelty in ſuch a caſe to prevent them from enjoying air and exerciſe.

Indeed the inſtitution appears to me to be moſt properly confined to the very loweſt of the people, thoſe who are almoſt vagrants, and who have ſcarcely a friend to aſſiſt them. The children of many poor and laborious people are at their own expence ſent to petty ſchools, and brought up as decently as can reaſonably be required; and I think that to confine them on Sunday evenings, or unite them in company with the idle and vagabond, may poſſibly do them more injury than ſervice.

The benefit to be derived from Sunday Schools, even to the proper object of the cha-

rity,

rity, muſt in every place depend greatly on the ſchoolmaſter; and I fear the ſtipend uſually paid is ſuch as will not engage, after the novelty is worn off, ſuch perſons as are likely to ſecure attention and obedience by their wiſdom or authority. Parents will not ſuffer a maſter of a degree as low as their own to puniſh, in an exemplary manner, or to dictate with a deciſive air to their children. Great obſtacles will often ariſe to this inſtitution from the pride and obſtinacy of parents in low life.

But the deſign is generous, and it may produce greater good than many apprehend. It may contribute much to preſerve Chriſtianity in its due vigour among us. It may reſcue many from a wretched life, an ignominious death, and worſe conſequences in futurity.

Whatever doubts the cold and cautious may entertain, the ſanguine zeal which its promoters diſplay does them honour as men and Chriſtians, and will have its reward. Whatever has ſo many promiſing appearances of being able to do great good, as the eſtabliſhment of Sunday Schools, ought certainly to have a trial, and not to be rejected till the fulleſt experience ſhall have proved it ineffectual or impracticable.

The rich have ſo many advantages, both for enjoyment of life and the improvement of their talents, that, in gratitude for them, they ought to contribute whatever they can to the comfort and inſtruction of the child of poverty. Chriſtianity teaches us to think, that the Giver of all good gifts will conſider this as a grateful return to him; and experience proves, that the improvement of the poor in good morals contributes greatly to the ſecurity and accommodation of the opulent.

CHAP. VI.

Miſcellaneous Literature.

I WAS reading a very impaſſioned copy of verſes in an epigrammatiſt, celebrated in his time, Bernardus Bauhuſius, and could not help being ſtruck with the impropriety of its concluſion. After the tendereſt exclamation it ends in a pun. The ſubject is *Ecce homo*, too ſerious an one to admit of witticiſm, and I believe the writer, in attempting wit upon it, complied with the taſte of the times without the leaſt intention to be unbecomingly jocular.

Ecce meus Jeſus pro me, livorque, cruorque,
Et tabum, et ſanies! Ecce homo, nullus homo!
Ecce homo, qui pro me!—ſed flendum eſt—currite, ocelli,
In duo flumina, mî lumina, liquimini.
Ite, piæ guttæ, pallentes currite rivis
Grandibus, indomitis, tabificis lachrymis.
Quid? nondum ulla venit? ceſſatis, lumina? ſaltèm
Unica—ſaltem una, O guttula parva, veni.
Me miſerum! non ulla venit, non profilit ulla!
O pie Chriſte, quis eſt, quem tu *adamas?* adamas.

I add a few epigrams, from the ſame author, for the entertainment of the claſſical reader. The following is on the three grand enemies of man, the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil.

TRES HOMINIS HOSTES.

Unum grammaticum, logicumque et rhetora vita:
Hos modò vitâris, cetera tuta tibi.
Quis rhetor?—*Mundus*;—fallax logicus?—*Cacodæmon*;
Semper declinans, eſt *Caro*, grammaticus.

The following is a part of an epigram on the Bed of the new-born infant Jeſus, and a curious ſpecimen of the taſte of the times. The poet laments the coldneſs of the bed.

IN LECTULUM DULCISSIMI INFANTIS JESU RECENS NATI.

Conde finiſtellam, dextellam, *Jeſule*, conde.
Conde, puelle, aures, conde, puelle, caput.
Oſcula, parvule, conde, labella tenerrima conde,
Hoc tege lumen et hoc, hoc tege tempus et hoc.—
O ego, mi Jeſu, tuus O! ſi lectulus eſſem,
Te, te ego, vel fuſo ſanguine calfacerem.
Sic ego; ſed contra mater: "non *ſanguine* gaudet
"Ille meus dulcis, melleus ille meus;
"Poſcit *aquam*"—jam nunc dabimus, dulciſſime virgo,
An multam? "multam"—num gelidam?—"calidam"
Num dulcem?—"ſalſam:"—de flumine?—"lumine"
—fonte?
"Fronte"—Ohe ſatis eſt, jam dabo, virgo, dabo.

Who is not ready to ſay with the poet *Ohe ſatis eſt?*

He thus concludes an epitaph on Arias Montanus the celebrated linguiſt. After enumerating almoſt all the known languages, in which he ſays

ſays Montanus was completely ſkilled, he adds well enough,

Angelicam optavit linguam quoque diſcere; Chriſtus
Audiit, angelicum ſuſtulit inquè chorum.

But the grand effort of genius, on which the poet values himſelf not a little, is the following. He calls it a verſe making one book, and a book conſiſting of one verſe. But I will give it and its title in the poet's own words.

" Divæ, optimæ, maximæque matri virgini
" Mariæ admirabilem hunc *Unius libri verſum,*
" *unius verſus librum,* Chriſtianum Proteum, tot
" ora ſcilicet quot cœlum ſydera gerentem (verti
" enim poteſt millies, bis et vicies, ſenſu ſalvo
" et heroici carminis lege) noſtri in cœli regi-
" nam affectus monumentum hoc ponimus ſem-
" piternum.

Tot tibi ſunt dotes, virgo, quot ſidera cælo.

" In eodem hoc Proteo retrogrados verſus
" pœne centum eſt invenire."

Another, which he thinks a ſuperior effort, follows.

" Deo optimo maximo æterno Dei filio Chriſto
" Jeſu mundi ſervatori *Proteus* e variis ſacrarum
" literarum locis depromptus, priori longe ad-

 " mirabilior,

" mirabilior, nam ſenſu ſalvo, et heroici carmi-
" nis lege, verti poteſt 3,628,800, ſcilicet tri-
" cies, ſexies, centies, millies, vicies octies millies
" et octingenties.

Rex, dux, ſol, lex, lux, fons, ſpes, pax, mons, petra,
CHRISTUS.

What a laborious calculation for a poet!

In a florid epigram, of ſome length, he gives his *heart* to Chriſt, and exhorts the ſons of men to do likewiſe, concluding thus:

Corda date.—O qui dat, quam ſine corde ſapit!

Of St. Stephen, who rejoiced while he was ſtoned, he ſays,

Siccinè amat lapides?—ſic certè—nonne *Corona* *
Ornari multo pulchra velit lapide.

His epigrammatic remark on the phyſician is not in a bad taſte.

Res miſera medicus eſt, cui nunquam benè eſt
Niſi malè ſit quam plurimis.

In his aſpirations after the heavenly flame, he exclaims,

O amor! O deſiderium! mea fax, meus ignis
Cur me ſic uris? cur?—quia tam *procul es.*

* i. e. Στεφανος.

The

The beggar's ſpeech is ſtriking.

De Deo loquor libenter, non libenter audio.

His hint to a ſturdy beggar deſerves attention.

Moſce, quid æra petis? vili quid de ſtipe vivis?
Alcidæ nervos, oſſa Milonis habes.
Vah pudeat!—ſum pauper, ais; mentire; ſuperſunt
En bini cenſus, dextra, ſiniſtra, tibi.

The following, written under a *half*-length figure, contains a fine compliment.

Dimidium pinxit quæ dextera *Borromæum*
Norât quod totum pingere nemo poteſt.

Another good epitaph on Arias Montanus.

Hoc Syrus in tumulo eſt, *Hebræus*, *Graius* et *Auſon*
Verus item, ſed non teter et uſtus, *Arabs*.
"Quinque homines," inquis?—ne, lector, fallere; namque
Graius, is et Latius, qui Syrus ille et Arabs,
Hebræuſque, *idem* eſt: nempè hic eſt magnus *Arias*,
Qui *patria unus* homo, *quinque* ſed *ore* fuit.

The uſe of love and fear.

Ut fugiam ſcelus omne, et amem ſuper omnia numen,
Da mihi fræna, timor, da mihi calcar, amor.

But I will add no more, leſt I weary the reader whom I wiſh to amuſe.

Bernardus Bauhuſius, like moſt of the ſons of Loyola, poſſeſſed learning and ingenuity, and the abſurdities of his manner are to be attributed to the erroneous taſte of his age. There are ſome kinds of falſe wit as entertaining from their abſurdity as the true. It is the *mediocris poeta*, the middling poet, the inſipid race who want ſenſe to be right, and ſpirit to be wrong, whom Horace means when he ſays, neither gods nor men, nor the bookſellers ſhops can tolerate them. It would be injuſtice to Bauhuſius not to allow that he has many elegant lines and phraſes, and ſome epigrams in the truly claſſical taſte, with ſenſe and beauty in the beginning and middle, and with point at the end.

I will diſmiſs the ſubject with the poet's own apology.

POETA AD MUSAM SUAM.

Serpere te momi dicunt, nimiumque jacere,
Increpat et ſoccos ille vel ille tuos.
Ne tamen hoc teneras urat tibi,—Muſa, medullas,
Serpunt et violæ et dulcia fragra *jacent*.

CHAP. VII.

Of being pleaſed with Oneſelf.

THERE is a kind of ſelf-complacency which ariſes ſolely from exceſſive ſelf-conceit. A perſon under the influence of this foible imagines every thing which he ſays or does excellent, and every thing that belongs to him ſuperior to the very ſame thing in the poſſeſſion of his neighbour. According to the common adage, his geeſe are all ſwans. This quality renders a man completely ridiculous, and is indeed utterly inconſiſtent with good ſenſe and the obvious ſuggeſtion of common experience.

But there is alſo another kind of ſelf-complacency, which is founded on ſolid and virtuous principles, and is the cauſe of one of the moſt ſubſtantial ſatisfactions which human nature can enjoy. I mean to enumerate a few of the means which have a natural tendency to produce it.

The offices of Chriſtian piety are attended with pleaſure of a ſpecies no leſs durable than exalted. It was this which induced Eraſmus to declare in a ſerious ſenſe, that there are no greater

Epicures

Epicures than *pious Chriſtians*. What can contribute more to pleaſure than the conſequence of piety, the calm ſerenity of reliance and reſignation?

To pleaſe oneſelf, ſuch is the happy conſtitution of things, nothing contributes more effectually than the communication of innocent pleaſure to others. I ſay innocent pleaſure; for it is the nature of guilt to add a bitter infuſion to the ſweeteſt cup of human delight.

Acts of pure Chriſtian charity, unmixed with oſtentation, leave a reliſh behind them which few gratifications equal or reſemble. I have no doubt but that the internal ſenſations of a truly charitable man, after having unoſtentatiouſly relieved a perſon in great and urgent diſtreſs, are more pleaſurable than thoſe of the moſt celebrated conqueror: and I imagine the good Samaritan and Mr. Hanway enjoyed greater delight than was uſually experienced by Alexander the Great, Cæſar, Charles the Twelfth, Frederick King of Pruſſia, or Lord Clive. The blood ſeems to run more ſmoothly in its channels after a benevolent action, ſo that the delight of it, while perfectly pure, may at the ſame time be denominated almoſt ſenſual. It is a delight alſo which may be recalled at will, and it affords peculiar ſolace under ſickneſs and affliction.

As

As the ſtate of man is progreſſive, Providence has been pleaſed to ordain that the ſteps of his improvement ſhould be attended with complacency. Whether the improvement is moral or mental, the pleaſure is great which accompanies it. A man feels himſelf riſing in value by every new acquiſition of good qualities. To be advancing more and more, by daily approaches, to attainable perfection, is a ſtate ſo pleaſant, that it may be ſaid to reſemble the aſcent up a beautiful hill, where the proſpect over variegated meadows, meandering ſtreams, foreſts, diſtant roofs and ſpires, becomes at every ſtep more delightful.

Induſtry in laudable purſuits is a never-failing ſource of internal ſatisfaction. It cauſes a pleaſing ſucceſſion of ideas, by bringing new objects, or a change of circumſtances, continually in view. And if it is converſant with matters of importance, and attended with ſucceſs, there is no ſtate ſo happy as that of an induſtrious man in the exerciſe of his ſkill and abilities.

To have ſubdued an irregular or exceſſive paſſion, and to have reſiſted a mean, a vicious, a degrading inclination, affords a pleaſing conſciouſneſs of virtuous reſolution; a ſenſation ſo agreeable and flattering, as could not have been equalled by the indulgence or compliance, and

has

has this additional advantage, that it is not followed by pain, remorſe, or any conſequences which can occaſion ſhame or ſorrow. On the contrary, after the indulgence of vice or irregularity, a man feels himſelf little and low; he deſpiſes himſelf, and recovers not his happineſs till, by contrition or amendment, he regains a due degree of ſelf-eſteem.

No bad man, ſays the heathen poet, is a happy man. *Nemo malus felix.* He is perhaps forever in purſuit of enjoyment; but he feels agitations and anxieties that detract much from his pleaſures, and his reflections upon them, and their conſequences to himſelf, his family, and many others, become, at leaſt in the ſolitary hours of dejection, ill-health, or of night alone, extremely uneaſy. So that it is not merely the declamation of a preacher, but the deciſion of experience ariſing from actual fact, which pronounces that a good conſcience is neceſſary to the true enjoyment of life.

No man can have a conſcience perfectly void of offence; but whoever has violated it reluctantly, and repented as often as he has tranſgreſſed, may be ſaid to have a good conſcience; and a treaſure it is more to be deſired than the treaſures which are continually brought from the Eaſt, by men, whom Providence ſuffers to become

some enormously rich to shew that enormous riches are no decisive marks of its peculiar favour.

How sweet the slumbers of him who can lie down on his pillow and review the transactions of every day without condemning himself! A good conscience is the finest opiate. The *materia medica* cannot supply one half so efficacious and pleasant; and all the nabobs together, if they were to unite their fortunes in contribution, could not purchase a similar one.

Good health, preserved by temperance and regularity, gives a sweetness to life, a pleasantness of feeling which no civil honours or secular prosperity can bestow.

Prudential œconomy in the management of expences, and the confining them to the certain income, so as not to be incumbered with debt, or distressed by the invention of ways and means to raise supplies for the current year, exempts from ten thousand painful solicitudes, and gives an ease and calmness of spirits unknown to the most opulent who possess not this caution; a caution equally required by prudence and common honesty. To see, in consequence of it, a family rising to independence, not likely to be exposed to the scorn and ill usage of the world, affords a comfort more

more ſatisfactory than the fugacious pleaſures of oſtentatious extravagance.

Self-eſteem, founded on rational principles, is one of the firſt requiſites to a happy life; and to the honour of virtue and religion, let it be remarked, that it is attainable only by a benevolent, a wiſe, a prudent conduct. Men who, by early education, by happily falling among good examples, by reading good books, and by forming good habits in conſequence of all theſe advantages, conduct themſelves in all things with reaſon, with moderation, and with kindneſs;—theſe are they, who, after all the pretenſions of voluptuouſneſs, enjoy the moſt of this world; for their happineſs flows like a gentle ſtream uninterrupted in its courſe, uniform and conſtant, while that of others is like a torrent, which daſhes from rock to rock, all foam, all noiſe for a little while, till it is loſt in the ocean, or waſted away by its own violence. It is deſtructive of others, deſtructive of itſelf, and too turbulent to admit of pure tranquillity.

Let thoſe who have wandered in purſuits which themſelves are ready to acknowledge deluſive and unſatisfactory, reſolve, by way of experiment, to try whether the pleaſure of that ſelf-eſteem which ariſes from rectitude of conduct, is not the moſt pleaſing poſſeſſion which this

this world affords, whether it does not promote a conſtant chearfulneſs and gaiety of heart, which renders life a continual feaſt. The path of duty, comparatively ſpeaking, is ſtrewed with flowers and ſurrounded with fragrance. To the timid, the ſlothful, and ill-diſpoſed, the firſt entrance may appear to be cloſed with briars; but he who has courage to break through the difficulties raiſed by his own imagination, will find himſelf in as pleaſant a walk as is to be found beneath the moon. I ſhall not draw a deceitful picture with the colours of rhetoric. Much uneaſineſs and ſome ſorrow muſt be the lot of every man in his preſent ſtate; but I contend that the pleaſantneſs of wiſdom and virtue is not fictitious, and that he who faithfully adheres to them will, upon the whole, enjoy all the delight of which his nature and his ſituation render him capable.

Many philoſophers maintain that ſelfiſhneſs is the ſpring of all our activity. Whether their ſyſtem is well founded or not, it is certain that in purſuit of the pleaſure of rational ſelf-eſteem we may be as ſelfiſh as we pleaſe without incurring the diſgrace of meanneſs; for to the indulgence of this kind of ſelfiſhneſs it is neceſſary to cultivate every thing liberal, generous, uſeful, amiable. The pleaſure ariſing from it is not unſocial, though it centres in ſelf; for it is not to

be

be enjoyed but by promoting the good of ſociety. The pleaſure is the firſt reward which Providence has been pleaſed to aſſign to the honeſt efforts of humble virtue, a reward infinitely diſproportionate to that reſerved for it in a better ſtate, but ſtill of a pure, of a celeſtial nature, and great enough to excite the moſt ardent efforts in its acquiſition.

What happineſs can ſubſiſt without this eſſential ingredient, ſelf-complacency? External circumſtances are of no value without it. The gold loſes its luſtre, and the purple its gloſſy dye, without it. Titles, rank, power, property, the grand idols of a proſtrate world, are deceitful and empty whenever the delicious tranquillity of a mind ſoothed to rational complacency is a ſtranger to the boſom.

There is this additional advantage in being pleaſed with oneſelf, on ſolid reaſons, that it puts one in good humour with the world. All nature ſeems to ſmile with us; and our hearts, dilating with conſcious virtue and benevolence, feel a new delight in the communication of complacency.

CHAP. VIII.

Of affected Senſibility; a Lamentation over an unfortunate Animalcule.

BELINDA was always remarkably fond of pathetic novels, tragedies, and elegies. Sterne's ſentimental beauties were her peculiar favourites. She had indeed contracted ſo great a tenderneſs of ſenſibility from ſuch reading that ſhe often carried the amiable weakneſs into common life, and would weep and ſigh as if her heart was breaking at occurrences which others, by no means deficient in humanity, viewed with indifference. She could not bear the idea of killing animals for food. She deteſted the ſports of fiſhing and hunting, becauſe of their ineffable cruelty. She was ready to faint if her coachman whipt his horſes when they would not draw up hill; and ſhe actually fell down in a fit on a gentleman's treading on her favourite cat's tail as he eagerly ſtooped to ſave her child from falling into the fire.

As ſhe was rather of a romantic turn, ſhe would frequently utter ſentimental ſoliloquies on benevolence and humanity; and when any cataſtrophe

ſtrophe of a pathetic nature occurred, ſhe generally gave vent to her feelings by writing a lamentation. I procured from one of her friends the following piece, with liberty to preſent it to the public eye.

Belinda, it ſeems, was at her toilette, adorning her treſſes, when an animalcule of no great repute in the world, but who often obtrudes where he is not welcome, fell from her beautiful treſſes on her neck. In the firſt emotions of her ſurpriſe and anger ſhe ſeized the little wretch, and cruſhed it between her nails, till it expired with a ſound

Δουπησεν δε πεσων.

as Homer expreſſes the exit of his heroes.

The noiſe and the ſight of the viſcera ſoon recalled her ſenſibility, and ſhe thus expreſſed it.

" Thou poor partaker of vitality, farewell. Life undoubtedly was ſweet to thee, and I have haſtily deprived thee of it. But ſurely the world was wide enough for thee and me. And it was ungenerous to murder one who ſought an aſylum under my foſtering protection.

" Becauſe thou art minute we are inclined to ſuppoſe thee inſenſible. But doubtleſs thou hadſt nerves

nerves and delicate ſenſations proportioned to the fineneſs of thy organs. Perhaps thou hadſt a partner of thine affections and a numerous progeny, whom thou ſaweſt riſing to maturity with parental delight, and who are now left deſtitute of a protector in their helpleſs infancy.

"Thy pain is indeed at an end; but I cannot help deploring the unfeeling cruelty of thoſe who deprive the ſmalleſt reptile, to whom nature has given breath, of that life which, though it appears contemptible in the eyes of the thoughtleſs, yet is ſweet to the meaneſt animal—*was* ſweet to thee, thou poor departed animalcule. Alas, that I muſt now ſay *was ſweet* to thee! Did I poſſeſs the power of reſuſcitation, I would reanimate thy lifeleſs corps, and cheriſh thee in the warmeſt corner of thy favourite dwelling-place.—But adieu forever; for my wiſh is vain. Yet if thy ſhade is ſtill conſcious, and hovers over the head it once inhabited, pardon a haſty act of violence, which I endeavour to expiate with the tear of ſympathy and the ſigh of ſenſibility."

Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

I am informed that the drawer of her writing-table is full of elegies and elegiac ſonnets on rats

and mice caught in traps, and of tom tits, and robin redbreaſts, killed by ſchool-boys. I remember to have heard a moſt pathetic elegy recited on the death of a redbreaſt, but can only recollect one pathetic *Eroteſis*. "Who killed Cock "Robin?"

There is alſo a ſublime deification of an earthworm which ſhe once accidentally trod upon as ſhe was endeavouring to reſcue a fly from a ſpider in the garden. It concludes thus:

> But ceaſe to weep—no more to crawl
> In the dark earth beneath yon wall,
> On ſnow white pinions thou ſhalt riſe,
> And claim thy place in yonder ſkies.

Efts, toads, bats, every thing that hath life, has a claim to her tendereſt compaſſion. And certainly her tenderneſs to them does her honour; but the exceſſive ſenſibility which their ſlighteſt ſufferings ſeem to occaſion, gives room to ſuſpect that ſhe is not without affectation. What is ſo ſingular and exceſſive can ſcarcely be natural.

Having heard and obſerved ſo much of her delicate feelings for the irrational creation, I was naturally led to make enquiries concerning her behaviour in the more intereſting attachments of private life. I expected to find that—ſhe, of courſe,

Like

Like the needle true,
Turned at the touch of joy or woe,
And turning, trembled too.

The following is the reſult of my inveſtigation. Her temper was ſo various and violent that her huſband was often obliged to leave his home in ſearch of peace. I heard he had juſt recovered from a fit of illneſs, during the whole of which ſhe had ſeldom viſited him, and ſhewn no ſolicitude. She had ſat weeping over a novel on the very day on which his fever came to a criſis, and the phyſicians had declared his recovery dubious. On his recovery he had gone on a voyage to the Eaſt Indies, by her advice, for the improvement of his fortune. He took leave of her very affectionately; but ſhe was dreſſing to go and ſee Mrs. Siddons in Caliſta, and could not poſſibly ſpend much time in a formal parting, which was a thing ſhe above all things deteſted. But, let it be remembered, ſhe fainted away in the boxes on Mrs. Siddons's firſt entrance, before the actreſs had uttered a ſyllable.

Two fine little boys were left under her care, without controul, during their father's abſence. The little rogues had fine health and ſpirits, and would make a noiſe, which ſhe could not bear, as ſhe was buſy in preparing to act a capital part in the

Orphan at a private theatre built by a man of fortune and faſhion for his own amuſement. She determined therefore to ſend the brats to ſchool. Indeed ſhe declared in all companies ſhe thought it the firſt of a mother's duties to take care that her children were well educated. She therefore ſent them outſide paſſengers by the ſtage coach to an academy in Yorkſhire, where ſhe had ſtipulated that they ſhould not come home in the holidays, and indeed not till their father arrived; for ſhe was meditating a new tragedy, under the title of the Diſtreſt Mother or the Widowed Wife.

Though ſhe was not very fond of her huſband, who was a plain good man, without any *fine feelings*, and was diſpleaſed with her children, whoſe noiſe interrupted her ſtudies, yet, I took it for granted, that ſhe who ſpoke ſo feelingly of diſtreſs, of benevolence, of humanity, of charity, and who ſympathiſed with the poor beetle that we tread upon, could not be but profuſely beneficent to all her fellow creatures in affliction who ſolicited her aſſiſtance; but I was here alſo greatly miſtaken. A workman in ſtopping up her windows in conſequence of the late commutation tax, fell from a ſcaffold three ſtories high and broke his leg. The paſſengers took him up, knocked at the door, and deſired he might be admitted

admitted till a ſurgeon could be ſent for; but I heard her as I paſſed by declaring, in a voice that might be heard from the ſtair-caſe on which ſhe ſtood quite to the end of the ſtreet—" He ſhall " not be brought here. We ſhall have a great " deal of trouble with him. Take him to the " hoſpital immediately; and ſhut the door, d'yé " hear, John." The paſſengers, leſt time ſhould be loſt, hurried the poor man to a neighbouring public houſe, where the honeſt landlord, with a pot of porter in his hand, and an unmeaning oath in his mouth, exclaimed, " Let him in?—aye, and " welcome.—Here, Tom, ſee him laid on my " own bed, and let him have every thing neceſ- " ſary; and if he never pays me its no great " matter.—Come here's to his getting well again " ſoon—Poor man—I warrant now he has a " wife and family that muſt ſtarve till he gets " about again—but they ſhan't neither—I'll " mention it to our club—They are all hearty " ones, I know, and will ſubſcribe hand- " ſomely."

The truth was, that the man had a wife and family, as my landlord conjectured, and is commonly the caſe. I heard that he went next morning to Belinda with a petition, drawn up very pathetically by a lawyer, who never gave any thing himſelf. Belinda had given orders to

the ſervants to ſay ſhe was not at home if any body ſhould call that week. For, indeed, ſhe was exceedingly engaged in penning an elegy on the lap-dog who had died of a looſeneſs; and had intended to finiſh her addreſs to the Dutcheſs on the hardſhips of the labouring poor.

I was ſatisfied with theſe enquiries, and began to loſe my veneration for ladies and gentlemen of exquiſite ſenſibility, of delicate feeling, and the moſt refined ſentiment; believing firmly, that there is more good ſenſe and true kindneſs in the plain motherly houſewife, who is not above her domeſtic duties, and in the honeſt man of common ſenſe, than in the generality of pretenders to more benevolent ſenſations or *finer feelings* than belong to other people of equal rank, opulence, and education.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Art of Speaking, or Rhetoric, as cultivated at preſent.

Vir bonus, dicendi peritus. CATO.

IT appears that many of our countrymen have riſen to great honours in the ſtate, and raiſed their families to nobility, by a talent of haranguing with volubility in the Houſe of Commons or at the bar. Yet this talent is not always an indubitable mark of genius, ſuperior judgment, or real wiſdom. It has been poſſeſſed by men of ſuperficial attainments and moderate abilities, and ſingular indiſcretion; but it ſtrikes, it dazzles, it carries the judgment of the hearer captive; and, from the appearance of a wonderful production without previous ſtudy, it cauſes an idea of genius ſurpaſſing the common ſtandard, and approaching to inſpiration.

" Orationis ubertatem et copiam ſcio elo-
" quentiam vulgo videri, ac etiam exiſtimari ab
" iis, qui ſi quos infinitâ quadam profluentiâ,
" continentique ac nunquam intermittente ſer-
" mone *volubiles*, et canoros audiunt; eos con-
" tinuo diſertos, eos patricio ex ordine oratores

 " vocant,

" vocant, et vocaliſſimum quemque eloquentiſſi-
" mum interpretantur: an vero huic verborum
" copiæ tanquam corpori animus ſubſit, non
" ſanè ſedulo conſiderant, aut ſaltèm non mag-
" noperè deſiderant; cum tamen Romanæ
" parens eloquentiæ nihil tam famoſum exiſti-
" maret, quam verborum vel optimorum, ut
" ipſe ait, et ornatiſſimorum ſonitum inanem,
" nullâ ſubjecta ſententiâ nec ſcientiâ. Quin-
" etiam cum videret oratorum aliis verba, aliis
" rem deeſſe; quamvis ipſe laudandam nequa-
" quam putaret illorum infantiam, qui, quæ
" noſſent, explicare dicendo nequirent; ſicut
" nec inſcitiam eorum, quibus in magnâ *ver-*
" *borum ubertate* anguſta res foret: tamen ſi
" alterutrum eſſet optandum, *malle ſe dixit je-*
" *junam illorum et indiſertam prudentiam, quam*
" *horum copioſam et ſtultam loquacitatem.*" Fa-
miani Stradæ Proluſ. lib. ii. Proluſ. i. p. 125.
Edit. Oxon.

As public garrulity anſwers the temporary purpoſes of intereſt and ambition, it is not to be wondered that it ſhould be valued highly, and purſued with the keeneſt avidity. I know of no accompliſhment ſo eagerly deſired in the preſent age as that of oratory. " See," ſays the anxious parent, " what
" ſuch a lawyer and ſuch a ſtateſman has effected for
" himſelf

" himſelf and family. He has enriched and en-
" nobled it ſolely by his eloquence. As to law,
" he knew little of it. As to buſineſs he was a
" child in it; but he could talk like an angel,
" and you ſee how he is rewarded. Therefore,
" my dear boy, attend lecturers on the art, attend
" the theatre, read aloud, ſpeak in public when-
" ever you have an opportunity, and omit no-
" thing which can make you an orator."

Mr. Sheridan, the father of the ſtateſman, who does his father ſo much honour, is, with ſome reaſon, quite an enthuſiaſt in recommending to the youth of the nation the ſtudy of oratory. According to him, it is the one thing needful, the ſalvation of the nation, as every thing laudable and great depends upon it. I reſpect his zeal in the cauſe, though I do not judge it neceſſary, as there appears to be no deficiency of ſpeakers in either Houſe, or at the Tribunal; and the rewards which have been laviſhed on ſpeakers will not fail to preſerve a due attention to this accompliſhment. Greater merit in more uſeful exertions has not equal reward, becauſe it is not ſo oſtentatious, nor ſo intelligible to the vulgar.

There is certainly a kind of oratory which conſtitutes one of the nobleſt productions of hu-

man genius. Such was that of Demoſthenes, and ſuch that of Cicero in moſt of his orations, but not in all, for he ſometimes deſcended to the character of a mere advocate. But there is another of a very ſubordinate kind, which conſiſts in little more than mere volubility and declamation, exerted for purpoſes of faction, avarice, and ambition, with but few reſtrictions of conſcience, rules of equity, and truth, or concluſions of reaſon.

I am afraid much of that modern eloquence which we hear ſo greatly applauded is of the mean and mercenary kind; and I am led to think ſo, from obſerving that many of the moſt celebrated orators have confeſſedly affirmed things in the ſenate when it was agreeable to their intereſt or party views, and denied them again when their intereſt or regard to their party prompted them; affirmed things with the utmoſt vehemence, and the moſt unlimited confidence of aſſertion, which proved to have no foundation; and which, there is reaſon to think, the very orators themſelves did not, at the very time they poured out the torrent of their eloquence upon them, firmly believe. But they were eſteemed *able men for their party*, and employed to harangue for them, becauſe they were known to exert themſelves in this way without one reſtraint from

conſcience,

conſcience. Their tongues were uſed as ſharp ſwords to fight at the head of their followers for the ſpoils of victory; and the weapon has uſually been not only pointed and venomous, but two-edged.

At the bar no villain need deſpair. He may purchaſe, for a few guineas, an advocate famous for his eloquence, who, by dint of unparalleled audacity, loudneſs of voice, rapidity of utterance, ſophiſtry of reaſoning, ſhall confound the honeſt witneſſes into ſelf-contradiction, frighten the poor jurymen, and menace the judge into partiality for his iniquitous client. If he ſhould ſucceed, againſt every one's expectation, his fortune is made. Riches flow in and add to his inſolence. And now he ſtands forth an orator, a formidable orator, at the very ſound of whoſe voice truth and modeſty retire in ſilence, and bemoan their injuries unredreſſed.

It was this abuſe of eloquence, this babbling garrulity in defence of any cauſe, without regard to good, and juſt, and honourable principles, which induced Socrates, or rather Plato in his name, to enumerate rhetoric among the *turpes artes*, the arts that diſgraced their profeſſors and practitioners.

Gorgias Leontinus, a name celebrated by antiquity, was in many reſpects like the modern mercenary orator. He undertook to ſpeak in favour of any cauſe for pay, and on any art, or on any ſubject, better than thoſe who, from profeſſion and education, might be ſuppoſed beſt to underſtand it. And he would indeed ſpeak more *plauſibly* than they; in finer language, rounder periods, with a greater flow, with emphaſis and geſture; he deceived the vulgar, he gained his point; and a modern Engliſhman with his abilities would have reached an earldom. But when his ſpeeches were brought to the touchſtone of reaſon and truth they appeared vile; all counterfeit, with a gloſſy varniſh, but without an atom of intrinſic value. Bring the moſt celebrated ſpeeches of ſome patriots to the ſame touchſtone, and decide on their worth impartially, and then it will appear whether a knack of ſpeaking is the firſt merit in a ſtate, and whether it ought to be rewarded with civil honours in preference to prudence in action, and in council, to activity in public buſineſs, benevolence in great deſigns, foreſight in precaution, and many lovely virtues of the heart, and uſeful powers of the underſtanding, which make no noiſe, and deſpiſe all ſplendour.

Great

Great talkers in private life are not ſuppoſed to be great thinkers. Women and children are ſaid to be particularly loquacious. By analogy it may at leaſt be *ſurmiſed*, that the greateſt ſpeakers in public life are not always the wiſeſt men, and hiſtorical facts ſeem to juſtify the ſuppoſition.

But falſe oratory, though it ſerve the purpoſes of the orator, is often highly injurious to the public, by miſleading the judgment, and placing obſtacles in the way of right and beneficial conduct. It ought therefore to be diſcouraged; and the public ſhould beware of beſtowing that fame and thoſe honours on the power of ſpeaking with force and volubility, which are due only to that real wiſdom, which is uſually reſerved, and which ſays but little, though that little is always to the purpoſe.

"But" (ſays a man of the world very truly) "men muſt raiſe themſelves by *dazling* "exertions. Culprits when accuſed muſt be "defended by ſomebody; he who can do it "moſt ſucceſsfully *by any means* will be em- "ployed, will be enriched, and, perhaps, if "he carries his talent from the bar to the "ſenate, ennobled. This is the natural effect "of things where intereſt and ambition are the

" firſt objects; ſo keep your ideas of imaginary
" excellence for the land of Utopia."

I hear in ſilence and take my leave, referring the venal defenders of things in their preſent ſtate, however corrupted, to the contemptible orators in the ſchool of Gorgias Leontinus.

" Fuiſſe hæc olim quemadmodum juncta na-
" tura, ſic officio quoque copulata, ut iidem
" *ſapientes* atque *eloquentes* haberentur: ſcidiſſe
" deinde ſe ſtudium, atque inertiâ factum eſſe,
" ut artes eſſe plures viderentur; nam ut pri-
" mum *lingua eſſe cœperit in quæſtu*, inſtitutumque
" eloquentiæ bonis malè uti, curam morum eos
" qui diſerti habite ſint, reliquiſſe; eam vero
" deſtitutam infirmioribus ingeniis veluti prædæ
" fuiſſe." QUINTILIAN.

CHAP. X.

Of the dull Style.

WRITERS of ſtrong intellect are often without imagination and ſentiment, and conſequently dull. They ſyllogize admirably; but they cannot impreſs ideas with force, they cannot paint images with the pencil of fancy in the ſhape and colours of nature. They know not how to uſe the figure which the ancients called *Enargeia*, and which conſiſted in repreſenting the action or fact related in ſo lively a manner as to render the reader a ſpectator *. Their books are therefore approved; and then laid up on the ſhelf, where they continue in very good condition for ſale, whenever it ſhall be their lot to be placed in a bookſeller's catalogue. The dull ſtyle is an excellent preſervative of books, as far as the binding and paper are concerned.

Metaphyſical writers have greatly countenanced the dull ſtyle. Their topics are of ſuch a nature as ſcarcely to admit of vivacity. Yet they are voluminous. They have no pity on

* Την αχειρ οψιν ποιειε

their

their readers, who, if they mean to be acquainted with the recondite authors, are obliged to toil with a pick-axe through tomes of dulneſs, with as much darkneſs around them, and labour in their progreſs, as if they were at work in the lead-mines. I wonder that there ſhould be many ſuch writers; but I wonder more that they ſhould have any readers, except thoſe invalids who labour under the want of ſleep, and who find ſuch pages wonderfully efficacious in promoting gentle ſlumbers.

There are many large works with pompous and ſpecious titles which may be ſaid to be written upon NOTHING, conſiſting of mere ſpeculation and fanciful reaſoning, which, while it pretends to argument and ſolidity, is more airy and viſionary than the romance of Caſſandra. It would be eaſy to enumerate many works metaphyſical, theological, ſceptical, philoſophical, and political, which are mere cobwebs, ſpun from the brain of inexperienced and unlearned ſpeculatiſts, taking up much time in the reading, puzzling, confounding every thing they touch upon, and leading to no valuable concluſion. Their novelty, and the fame they ſometimes acquire by the appearance of profound knowledge and wonderful refinement, has procured them readers, and introduced a taſte for, or at leaſt a patient attention

attention to, dull thought in languid language.

Sceptical writers and abuſers of Chriſtianity are often men of diſputatious tempers with little ſentiment and fancy, and conſequently their works are, with few exceptions, very ſoporific. Even Lord Bolingbroke, a lively writer on other occaſions, diſplays in his philoſophical writings a ſtyle and manner of writing which may be called a mere lullaby. Hume's metaphyſics are alſo worthy to be offered up at the ſhrine of Morpheus, unleſs Vulcan ſhould make a prior claim to them.

Few, I think, would wade through the dull and dry ſpeculations of infidels and airy metaphyſicians, if they were not ſupported in their progreſs by ſelf-flattery. They pleaſe themſelves with the fancied conſciouſneſs of great depth, ſubtlety, and acuteneſs; and are alſo not unwilling to be conſidered by thoſe who know what they read, as very profound thinkers, men above the level of vulgar prejudice, free from the ſhackles of education, ſitting like gods in the ſkies, and beholding other poor mortals blindly wandering in the regions below them. A little cloudineſs, and even darkneſs, contributes to augment the dignity of writer and reader.

It ſeems probable, *a priori*, that men who write againſt religion ſhould be dull; for men of great ſenſibility feel devotion very forcibly. Their love, their gratitude, their hopes and their fears, are all powerfully influenced by religious ideas. But the frigid philoſopher allows nothing to ſenſations of which he is not conſcious, but, at the ſame time, would bring every thing to the tribunal of his own reaſon, which he conſiders as infallible.

The taſte for ſyſtematical writings, where every thing is forced to bend to an hypotheſis formed in the writer's mind, contributes much to the prevalence of dulneſs. For ſyſtematizers indulge nothing to fancy, and admit no colours of rhetoric, but ſatisfy themſelves with fabricating a chain of dry argument to lead up to the firſt link or ſpring, which they have forged by the *fiat* of their own authority. Men of geometrical and logical genius may be pleaſed with an ingenious ſyſtem founded on the ſand, but it will have few charms, and produce no effect with the world at large. It is a pretty curioſity, and is to be laid up like ſhells and moſſes in the cabinets of the curious, for the inſpection of the virtuoſi.

The learned and philoſophical are a ſmall number in compariſon of the reſt of mankind, and,

and, as they are already cultivated and refined in a great degree, want not the improvements derived from publications ſo much as the buſy tribe employed in uſeful and honourable action in the living world. To addreſs metaphyſical works to them (though they might reliſh them) is, comparatively ſpeaking, unneceſſary; and, we may reſt aſſured, that they will not be read by the men of buſineſs, unleſs by a few, who wiſh to appear deeper than their neighbours.

Of what kind are the works which have become the favourites of an admiring world, ſuch as Homer, Virgil, Milton, Shakeſpeare? Homer is all life. He throws his narrative into a dramatic form, on purpoſe to give it an air of vivacity. A man who reads and taſtes Homer will not only be conſtantly awake and anxiouſly attentive, but elevated, fired, enraptured. Virgil, Milton, and Shakeſpeare, are not quite ſo lively as their great model, but they are next to him in that quality, nor after a very long interval. Vivacity, ſpirit, fire, are the ingredients which embalm writers for eternity.

An affectation of great delicacy, ſoftneſs, and gentleneſs, contributes much to dulneſs. An even, ſmooth, unvaried ſtyle, though it may be commended by the critics, and pronounced faultleſs, will

will yet infallibly cauſe the reader to ſtretch out his arms and yawn.

General terms, inſtead of particular, idle epithets, long and ill turned periods, are in their nature dull.

A ſlow crawling ſtyle, jogging on like a broad wheeled waggon, though it ſhould be richly laden with ſenſe, will not tempt many to accompany it for pleaſure, who are able to enjoy the rapidity of a poſt-chaiſe and four.

The anticipation of matter by a previous declaration of your method, as is frequently done in ſermons, renders the whole languid and flat. Diviſions and ſubdiviſions of the ſubject, which appear in ſermons, have a powerful effect in realizing Hogarth's ſleeping congregation.

In a word, whatever ſolicits attention without repaying it by ſtriking facts, beautiful language, lively imagery, and the ſplendour which genius, like the ſun, diffuſes over all it ſhines upon, muſt be irkſome, and, becauſe it is irkſome, will in time be neglected, and therefore entirely ceaſe to produce the effect which the writer intended.

Bad

Bad writers, as well as good, muſt abound in a country where the preſs is open, and a thouſand motives beſides genius, impel men to employ it.

Manufactures are, however, ſerved and promoted by the making of books; otherwiſe, at leaſt half that have appeared might as well have been ſuppreſſed; I mean not thoſe which are calculated to do harm, but thoſe which can do neither harm nor good, from their intolerable dulneſs and inſipidity.

But I muſt refrain. Perhaps I am advancing opinions which may weigh againſt my Winter Evenings. I believe I had better ſay no more, but leave the gentle reader to ſtretch himſelf after this narcotic. Already, perhaps, he will be tempted to ſay, that he finds I not only know the theory of dulneſs, but alſo the practice.

CHAP. XI.

Of ſome Circumſtances relating to conjugal Felicity.

I PRESENT my reader with the following letters, which deſcribe a ſituation in private life.

My dear Huſband,

I WRITE not to upbraid you. I entertain a ſincere affection for you, and no unkind uſage ſhall ever remove it. I write only to let you know the ſtate of thoſe whom you have unfortunately abandoned, your children and your wife.

Fame has informed me, with too much authenticity, that you have found another object of your love, and that I ſhall ſee your face no more. I who had expected your return from the Eaſt Indies with painful anxiety, who had counted the ſlow hours which parted you from me,—think how I was ſhocked at hearing you would come to England no more, and that you had ſettled with a miſtreſs in the South of France. It was for your ſake that I lamented. You went againſt my earneſt entreaties; but it was with a deſire, which I thought ſincere, to provide a genteel maintenance for our four little ones, whom you

you ſaid you could not bear to ſee brought up to the evils of poverty. I might now lament the diſappointment in not ſharing the expected riches which I hear you have amaſſed. But I ſcorn it. What are riches compared to the delight of ſincere affection! I deplore the loſs of your love; I deplore the frailty which has involved you in error, and will, I am ſure, as ſuch miſtaken conduct muſt, terminate in miſery.

But I mean not to remonſtrate. It is, alas! too late. I only write to you to acquaint you with the health and ſome other circumſtances of myſelf and thoſe little ones whom you once loved.

The large houſe in which you left us in Harley-ſtreet could not be ſupported without an expence which the little ſum you left behind could not long ſupply. I have relinquiſhed it, and retired to a neat little cottage in a village fifty miles from London. We can make no pretenſions to elegance; but we live in great neatneſs, and, by ſtrict œconomy, ſupply our moderate wants with as much comfort as our deſolate ſituation will allow. Your preſence, my love, would make the little cottage a palace.

Poor Emily, who is grown a fine girl, has been working a pair of ruffles for you, and as ſhe

ſhe ſits by my ſide, often repeats with a ſigh, When will my dear papa return? The others are conſtantly aſking me the ſame queſtion; and little Henry, as ſoon as he began to talk, learned to liſp, in the firſt ſyllables he ever uttered, When will papa come home?

Sweet fellow! He is now ſitting on his ſtool by my ſide, and as he ſees me drop a tear, aſks me why I cry, for papa will come home ſoon. He and his two brothers are frequently riding on your walking-cane, and take particular delight in it, becauſe it is papa's.

I do aſſure you I never open my lips to them on the cauſe of your abſence. But I cannot prevail with myſelf to bid them ceaſe to aſk when you will return, though the queſtion frequently extorts a tear (which I hide in a ſmile), and wrings my ſoul, while I ſuffer in ſilence.

I have taught them to mention you with the greateſt ardour of affection in their morning and evening prayers; and they always add of themſelves a petition for your ſpeedy return.

I ſpend my time in giving them the little inſtruction I am able. I cannot afford to place them at any eminent ſchool, and do not chuſe

that

that they ſhould acquire meanneſs and vulgarity at a low one. I hope you will approve my teaching Emily and the two elder boys the French language. They have already made a tolerable proficiency in it. As to Engliſh, they read alternately three hours every morning the moſt celebrated poets and proſe writers, and they can write, though not an elegant, yet a very plain and legible hand.

Do not, my dear, imagine that the employment is irkſome. It affords me a ſweet conſolation in your abſence. Indeed, if it were not for the little ones, I am afraid I ſhould not ſupport it.

I think it will be a ſatisfaction to you to hear that, by retrenching our wants and expences, we are enabled to pay for every thing we buy; and, though poor, are not unhappy from the want of any neceſſary.

Pardon my interrupting you. I mean to give you ſatisfaction. Though I am deeply injured by your error, I am not reſentful. I wiſh you all the happineſs you are capable of, and am your once loved, and ſtill affectionate,

EMILIA.

After an interval of three years, the following anſwer was returned:

Excellent EMILIA,

By the time you receive this, the hand which wrote it will be laid in the grave. I have ordered it not to be tranſmitted to you, till I am departed; and I am now on my death-bed. My phyſician has told me, in delicate terms, that I cannot recover.

Avarice led me to ſeparate from you; a ſeparation of a year or two cauſed me, weak as I was, to forget you, and to form a connection, from which I have derived nothing but torment. I deſerved it by my folly and my wickedneſs. You were the beſt of women, and I have wronged you beyond the power of reparation.

I will not give you pain by a particular enumeration of my various miſeries. I have been infatuated by one who loved me not, but loved the treaſure I rapidly amaſſed in the Eaſt, and left no effort untried to captivate my affections. She contrived to come home in the ſame ſhip, where our acquaintance encreaſed to an intimacy, which has laid the foundation of all my diſtreſs. But, could you believe it? After having ſpent in diſſipation and in gaming almoſt the whole of

my fortune, ſhe left me, not without involving me in a fatal duel, and accompanied the man who gave me my death's wound. The following letter I encloſe, that you may have the ſatisfaction to ſee how different a woman ſhe was from yourſelf.

Deſpicable wretch,

Do you think I will live in beggary with you? Refuſe to buy me the diamond necklace! Captain ——— is a generous man. He has long expreſſed a regard for me. He has bought the necklace which you, mean fellow, refuſed. Make no more pretenſions to me; and if you dare be angry with the Captain for any liberties he may take, be aſſured you will meet with your match: and I hope to hear that he makes you repent your inſolence when you aſpired to the affections of one who is deſerving of a man of ſpirit, and ———

Your's no more.

Till I received this I never thought of your letter. Indeed, as I knew your hand, I never opened it; for it reached me when I was intoxicated with newly acquired opulence, and a variety of vicious gratifications.

It has indeed afforded me ſatisfaction, as you kindly intended it, to find that my poor children

have ſuch a mother to compenſate the injuries of a deluded father.

The wound inflicted by my antagoniſt, who is alſo a married man, is in a vital part; and there is not, as I have told you, the leaſt hope of recovery. I can ſcarcely wiſh it, unleſs it were to repent of my tranſgreſſions; for I ſhould be aſhamed to ſee my injured Emilia, and the preſence of the little ones would break my heart. I have had time to make a will; and the ſum which I have left, though little in compariſon with what I acquired abroad, will, I confide, under your care, ſupply a decent competency.

Forgive me, my dear wife, forgive me, my dear children, and remember that the father who cruelly deſerted you lived a wretch in conſequence of his unkindneſs, and died prematurely. It was the laſt ſatisfaction he had that he lived to ſee his error, and to aſk God and his family forgiveneſs. Farewell; and may you and your dear children avoid the miſery by avoiding the wickedneſs of your huſband,

———.

The ſilent grief of the amiable Emilia can eaſily be conceived. But her own heart and her children conſoled her. She had brought up her children

children virtuouſly, and furniſhed them with uſeful knowledge to the beſt of her power; and they repaid her by gratitude and good conduct. The addition to their very little fortune was opulence to thoſe who had not expected it.

When time had mitigated her grief, I have often heard her in converſation lament the ſituations which cauſe married perſons to ſeparate at a great diſtance, and for a long time, which, in ſome minds, are apt to eraſe the traces of affection; and ſhe has ſpoken with warmth againſt that avarice which drives people who have a competency, and might reaſonably be contented at home, to foreign climes in purſuit of enormous wealth, which Providence, as a puniſhment for avarice, frequently renders the occaſion of miſery.

CHAP. XII.

Of the preſent State of Theatrical Amuſements.

REAL life affords not at all times ſufficient objects to employ the active faculties of man. Truth, matter of fact, and neceſſary buſineſs, ſoon ceaſe to wear the grace of novelty. Fiction is therefore called in as an auxiliary to fact, and becomes highly uſeful in affording recreation. Hence romances and novels; hence alſo the drama and all the ſcenic repreſentations of the theatre.

The taſte for theatric ſpectacles is univerſal. It is found in the moſt poliſhed ages of antiquity, and in the rudeſt nations of modern diſcovery. It is ſeen to prevail in Greece and Rome, and in the Iſles of the Southern Ocean. It is ſeen not only in London and Paris, but at Otaheite.

The Athenians were attached to public ſpectacles with an ardour which cauſed them to forget their public duty. They expended on the theatre the money which ſhould have ſupported a formidable military power. Demoſthenes employs a great part of his moſt celebrated orations in endeavouring to convince them of the danger of their infatuation.

tuation. He is obliged to touch the ſubject with great delicacy and timidity; for they would ſcarcely hear any thing ſaid againſt their favourite foible, even when their political exiſtence depended on its removal. It would at one time have given them far leſs uneaſineſs to hear that an army was defeated, than that the diverſions of the theatre were prohibited. Every Athenian received, it appears, two *oboli per diem* from the treaſury, which they called *theatre money*.

The demagogue Eubulus, to pay his court to the people, cauſed a law to be enacted, prohibiting, on pain of death, the making of a motion to reſtore the fund, which had been alienated in time of peace for the theatrical expences, to its original purpoſe the military ſervice, or the uſe of the public on any emergency. The law was afterwards repealed through urgent neceſſity.

Fond as Engliſhmen are of their theatres, I believe there is not a true Briton among them who would not chearfully conſent to ſhut up every place of public amuſement rather than be conquered by an inſidious neighbour and tyrant like Philip of Macedon; and let it be remembered, that Athenian liberty did not long ſubſiſt after the prevalence of this exceſſive attachment

to the theatre. When men value the amuſement of a ſight more than their liberty, it is not to be wondered if their liberty ſoon falls a ſacrifice to the corrupt artifices of ſome enterpriſing politician.

The Romans were ſcarcely leſs attached to public ſpectacles. In their decline they found a conſolation for the loſs of liberty in the diverſions of the theatres and Circus.

——————Duas tantum res anxius optat
Panem et Circenſes.—————— Juv.

They have no anxiety, ſays the ſatiriſt, ſpeaking of the Romans in their degenerate ſtate, but for the largeſſes of their patrons and the public amuſements.

Our Engliſh theatres have been cultivated during the laſt century with ſingular care; and the hiſtrionic art carried to high perfection; and in the preſent age there appears to be no deficiency.

The days of Garrick were, however, the days of theatrical glory. He was undoubtedly accompliſhed in the art which he profeſſed; but he had alſo another art, that of drawing attention to the theatres, by rendering them and their concerns

concerns the faſhionable topics of converſation. He wiſely devoted himſelf to one principal object, the illuſtration of Shakeſpeare's beauties; and, perhaps, carried the applauſe of that great poet higher than he would otherwiſe have done, for the ſake of raiſing himſelf at the ſame time. People were anxious to hear the beſt poet recited by the beſt actor; and I believe both he, his friends, and thoſe who were intereſted in the ſucceſs of the theatre, did not ſuffer any of his excellences to paſs without their due ſhare of newſpaper praiſe.

Similar arts have been practiſed ſince his final exit; but they were not ſupported by his merit, and they have been carried to an extreme, which has fruſtrated its own purpoſe.

Puffing, for ſuch is the technical term, ſeems to be relied on as the grand column on which the whole theatrical fabric is to ſtand. But it is uſed in ſuch exceſs that juſt praiſe loſes its effect by it.

Party prejudice, overbearing influence, connexions with great people, theſe carry off with applauſe the dull poem of the dramatiſt, and the mediocrity of actreſſes and actors. But where, in the mean time, ſhall modeſt merit find a friend?

In the public certainly. But the pit is by no means the arbiter at preſent, whatever might be the caſe in the days of the trunk-maker. According to ſome previous determination of party or prejudice, a player or play is to be admitted or exploded, and the pit, box, and galleries, join in confirming the ſentence with as little exerciſe of judgment as of candour.

The newſpapers decide on dramatic merit with abſolute authority. Thoſe who ſit in the pit, where the critics were ſaid to fix their ſeat, come with minds already prepoſſeſſed either for or againſt the poem or the actor, by the criticiſms of a newſpaper. A few may have ſenſe and ſpirit to judge for themſelves, but the majority are led by the arbitrary deciſion of ſome anonymous or intereſted detractor or encomiaſt.

Intereſt and corruption reign in the political world with little controul. We are ſo uſed to their prevalence, that, though we lament it, we are no longer ſurpriſed at it. But it is with aſtoniſhment we ſee it find its way into the republic of letters. Upon conſideration the wonder diminiſhes. The artful and avaricious have diſcovered that fame, in the theatric walk, whether of a writer or a reciter, is money. And therefore men employ themſelves to extol or de-

cry juſt on the ſame principles, and much in the ſame manner, as the Bulls and Bears in Exchange Alley.

But, in the progreſs of corruption, are we to become a nation of ſwindlers? Are the liberal and elegant Nine to be corrupted by the general contagion? Forbid it, taſte and genius; forbid it, Spirit of England.

Yes, ſays the artful puffer, forbid it as you pleaſe, there will be ſmuggling of theatrical and all other fame ſo long as the pence are to be gained by it.

Romæ omnia venalia.

It is an old complaint; and I fear there is no remedy for it but patience.

CHAP. XIII.

On the Practice of attributing all religious Principles and Actions to Superſtition.

In ſuperſtitione ineſt timor INANIS Deorum.
CIC. *de Natur. Deor.*

SUCH is the imperfection of language, that words cannot be found to diſcriminate all the variety of ideas of the human mind with that degree of preciſion which is neceſſary to avoid error. A great many miſtakes in morals ariſe from the abuſe of words, which are too often either voluntarily or malevolently miſunderſtood and miſapplied. The Chriſtian religion has always ſuffered by this perverſion. It ſuffers at this time, ſince it is denominated by thoſe who impiouſly endeavour to injure its cauſe, a mode of ſuperſtition. Though man boaſts much of his reaſon, it is really aſtoniſhing to conſider how few exerciſe it with effect. Give any thing a bad name, and the majority of mankind will abominate it without examination, merely in conſequence of the firſt impreſſion which they haſtily received from a miſapplied appellation.

The freethinkers of this age, who dignify themſelves with the name of liberal philoſophers, are

are remarkably inclined to ſtigmatize our religion with the name of ſuperſtition. They who wiſh to be eſteemed men of liberal minds, and who abhor the ridicule and cenſure which attends the bigot, are but too ready to join with the pretended philoſophers in exploding religion. To avoid the epithet of ſuperſtitious, which conveys to them the idea of weakneſs, they are raſh and precipitate enough to reject all the comfortable offers which religion reaches out to her ſincere votaries. The very name frightens them; and if they reſolve not to fear God, it is very certain that they are ſadly afraid of man. They dare the vengeance of Omnipotence; but they cannot ſtand againſt the ridicule of a minute philoſopher and a pert witling.

He muſt know little of the hiſtory of mankind who ſhall deny that ſuperſtition has prevailed in all ages and all nations, and cauſed much cruelty and miſery. Man has a natural tendency to ſuperſtition. Feeling himſelf weak and miſerable, he is ready to fly to any thing which his fancy ſuggeſts to him as a refuge in his diſtreſs. A ſtock or a ſtone becomes the object of his adoration. He is ready to inflict on himſelf the moſt excruciating torments, or to ſuffer them from others, if he is once perſuaded that he can thus appeaſe an angry Deity. Na-

tural affection dies at the command of ſuperſtition. A child is ſacrificed with alacrity, if the devotee is taught that with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed. Every thing yields to the devout phrenzy. That every philanthropiſt ſhould therefore endeavour to prevent its diffuſion among mankind, is to be expected and applauded. But let him not, through careleſſneſs or violence, root up a ſalutary plant in his endeavour to eradicate a weed. Religion is the medicine of human life, as ſuperſtition is its bane.

In this enlightened age there is little danger of groſs ſuperſtition. The darkneſs of ignorance was neceſſary to give to the bugbears of imagination the appearance of reality. Opinions are examined in this country with that freedom which our happy conſtitution allows, and that perſpicacity which a multitude of well-informed underſtandings muſt reaſonably be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs. The national religion is therefore profeſſed in all its native purity, and they who preſume to call it ſuperſtition, only prove their own wickedneſs and vanity.

Such vanity muſt be wicked, though at the ſame time it owes much of its origin to folly. Weak minds often ſeek nothing farther than

than the applauſe of their company. They appear wonderfully wiſe in their own eyes, if they can aſtoniſh their neighbours by the ſingularity or the boldneſs of their opinions. Such men are to be known, whenever a religious idea is introduced, by a ſignificant ſneer of contempt, or an uplifting of the eye-brows with an air of conſcious ſuperiority. If the language of grimace is not ſufficiently underſtood, they think it neceſſary to ſuggeſt a hint, "that they look upon "all ſuch ſuperſtitious ſtuff as unworthy men of "ſenſe," (by which they mean to characteriſe themſelves), "and fit only to ſcare children and "old women. For their own parts, they muſt "congratulate themſelves that they have eman-"cipated themſelves from the horrid ſlavery of "prejudice."

Nevertheleſs it would appear, on a fair examination, that theſe arrogant talkers are only half learned, and that pride fills up the mighty void of ſenſe; yet ſuch is the confidence with which they ſpeak, that the young and the weak are often ſeduced by them, and become their diſciples. Thus their ſect is encreaſed in numbers, and their arrogance encreaſes in a much greater proportion.

They teach their diſciples that religion owes its riſe to ſubtle politicians, and its ſupport to

the arts of prieſtcraft. That religion has been hypocritically abuſed by ſtateſmen and eccleſiaſtics to ſerve the purpoſes of avarice and ambition, is at once a melancholy and an undeniable truth. But will cavillers never deſiſt from arguing againſt the uſe of a thing from its abuſe, a fallacy unworthy a man of common underſtanding or common honeſty? I reprobate thoſe politicians and thoſe prieſts who have attempted to avail themſelves of religion as an artifice to promote their ſecular deſigns. They are more deteſtable than the open and declared unbeliever. If he is honeſt, he is an object of compaſſion rather than contempt; but thoſe artful politicians, who think to drive men to ſlavery, or obedience, as they call it, by frightening them with the phantoms of a religion which they do not themſelves believe, deſerve the vengeance of ſociety. It will be ſaid, that they mean to preſerve good order by promoting ſuperſtition. I cannot call that good order which is preſerved only by the deceit and hypocriſy of the rulers. Good order requires that men capable of ſo mean a deceit ſhould not be the governing part of ſociety. Their very pre-eminence diſturbs good order. The only good order which they can wiſh to promote is, that tame acquieſcence among the lower ranks, which allows themſelves to lord it over a ſubject world.

It is very true that religion contributes to ſecure a peaceable acquieſcence in good government. This is one among its many beneficent effects; but it is not true that religion is only the invention of politicians, and a mere ſtate engine to effect tranquillity. It originates in the human mind from the ſpontaneous feelings of nature. In the moſt unenlightened countries, where no pretenſions were ever made to revelation, traces of it are to be found. Nothing but ignorance united with depravity can deny the foundations of natural religion. Every good mind admitting natural religion by the light of natural underſtanding, will rejoice to find ſo many proofs of the Chriſtian revelation.

To fear God is the beſt method of acquiring that true courage which fears nothing elſe. The fear of God ariſes not from a timorous and weak mind, as the infidel pretenders to philoſophy repreſent it. I appeal to facts in the hiſtory of mankind. Have not the braveſt and beſt men in all ages and nations diſplayed a reverential awe of God? If only the weak had patronized religion, it would long ago have been exploded. The examples and arguments of the beſt and wiſeſt of mankind have operated, under the direction of Providence, in continuing among mankind that ſource of all true comfort, a due ſenſe

of

of religion. The vain and the wicked have endeavoured to deſtroy it, and they have always ſucceeded with a few; but they have not been able to prevail univerſally; neither will they; for it is founded on the rock of truth, and the *gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

I am ſorry to obſerve the philoſophy of Epicurus gaining ground in our country. It might be called the philoſophy of Satan. It is deſtructive of every thing virtuous and good, and equally portends the ruin of empires and of human nature. It flatters human depravity ſo much, that nothing can impede its progreſs but the counteracting prevalence of Chriſtian principles and practices.

I ſeriouſly exhort all, therefore, who are Chriſtians indeed, to dare to profeſs what they believe, and to diſcountenance error by the native fortitude of truth. The misfortune is, that the modeſt Chriſtian is too often reſtrained by his love of peace, and by his humility, from ſtanding up in the defence of the Goſpel; while the patrons of error, incited by vanity, and a malignant deſire of rendering others as wicked and miſerable as themſelves, are indefatigable in the diffuſion of their opinions. It becomes the duty of the ſincere Chriſtian to exert himſelf, when unbe-

lievers

lievers multiply, and the ſcorner from his chair declares the Chriſtian religion, like all other religions, to be only "*a mode of ſuperſtition.*"

On the Machiavellian principle of uſing religion as an engine of ſtate, let me aſk the pretended philoſophers, how the moſt important tranſactions of civil life, and how the buſineſs of courts of judicature can proceed, when they ſhall have ſucceeded in diffuſing the doctrine that Chriſtianity is but an artful deluſion to enthrall the vulgar? Will an oath be then of any force or obligation? Theſe philoſophers are more injurious to the intereſts of ſociety than many malefactors who are by the laws of their country capitally convicted. They deſtroy the very root of all civil and moral virtue. They are teachers of vice, not of timid and reluctant vice, but of vice which dares the broadeſt day-light, and boldly defends itſelf on avowed principle.

I will conclude with adding one ſuggeſtion, which, though it may not find univerſal approbation, will, I think, deſerve it. I am perſuaded that a good man ought to be cautious of expreſſing himſelf with ſcorn and contempt even on the ſubject of thoſe many falſe religions which prevail in the world, and which may juſtly deſerve the name of ſuperſtition; for it appears to me,

me, that God Almighty, as a benevolent Being, muſt always be pleaſed with intentional ſervice and obedience, though the mode of performing it is erroneous. At leaſt, I believe it will admit no doubt, that God will be better pleaſed with the zeal of the moſt ſuperſtitious than with the impiety and preſumption of the unbelieving philoſopher, who proudly imagines his own reaſon to be the ſtandard of all truth and propriety.

Theſe unhappy dupes of pride will, I dare ſay, at ſome future day, find their error refuted, if not by argument, yet by the ſlow puniſhments of an avenging God. For great and terrible is the Lord God omnipotent. Who may abide his wrath? If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.

Bleſſed indeed are they who throughout life have ſerved their God with devotion and humility. God ſhall make all their bed in their ſickneſs. Life to them ſhall be pleaſant, as a journey through a delightful country, warmed and enlightened by the ſun; and death ſhall be to them diſarmed of his terrors; ſo that both in life and at death they ſhall experience the truth of that declaration, which teaches us, that *the fear of God is the beginning of wiſdom.*

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Folly of ſuffering the Judgment to be ſeduced by Wit, in Things of Moment.

TO be remarkable for that lively and creative power of the mind which invents ſuch ideas as are both pleaſing and ſurpriſing, by their truth and novelty, is a diſtinction greatly to be valued. It is to poſſeſs a power of diffuſing a charm on every ſubject, and of ſtriking conviction in the mind with an inſtantaneous impulſe. There is no doubt but that the Giver of every good gift intended that it ſhould be productive of beneficial effects. It is certainly conducive to cheerfulneſs, and enlivens the dull identity of common life. It ridicules folly; and, by ridiculing, frequently corrects it. It often decides with momentary intuition on ſubjects which plodding induſtry has laboured only to augment the obſcurity. None, I believe, will indulge a general invective againſt wit but thoſe who are deſtitute of it.

Wit has ſometimes been uſed as an auxiliary to reaſon in the defence of religion. Dr. South poſſeſſed a ſhare of abilities which were ſufficient to brandiſh any weapon which he choſe to employ.

ploy. Wit in his hand was ſharp and irreſiſtible, and made its way like the ſcymitar or the battle-axe. He was one of the ableſt champions of the church. He is not only a wit but a ſolid reaſoner. His learning is equal to his natural endowments. Wit enlivens the maſs of his erudition, as the leaven leaveneth the farinaceous ſubſtance. Dr. South exerted his wit to ſo good purpoſes, and with ſo much effect, that he is moſt deſervedly placed in a high rank among the many excellent preachers who have adorned this country. A ſincere admirer of him cannot but wiſh that he had not deformed his writings with ſome expreſſions which, though not deſtitute of humour, muſt be condemned as vulgariſms.

Dr. Horne, the preſent Dean of Canterbury, who has diſcovered a genuine ſpirit of piety in his writings, and diſplayed the beauty of holineſs in all its charms, has attacked the philoſophy of Hume with the arms of ridicule. Indeed many parts of Hume's philoſophy appear to carry with them their own refutation by inherent abſurdity; but they fall into the hands of thoſe whoſe want of learning and of principles induces them to admit the arguments of ſophiſtry in defence of libertiniſm. Dr. Horne juſtly ſuppoſed that the admirers of Hume were more likely to be diſabuſed of their error by the fear of deriſion, than

by

by any force of argumentation. He has indeed derided both Hume and the Humiſts, as they affect to ſtyle themſelves, with ſingular ſucceſs. I only wiſh that the part of his book in which they are attacked could be univerſally introduced to their notice. It would operate as an antidote to his poiſon, unleſs indeed its genuine effect ſhould be prevented by the force of eſtabliſhed prejudice.

The latter part of Dr. Horne's letters upon infidelity I ſhould not have regretted, if it had been entirely omitted. It owes its origin to an obſcure pamphlet, which would never have emerged to notice by its proper power: and the difficulties of many paſſages in Scripture are by no means removed by the remarks of the pious Dean, however ingenious and well-intended.

After all, it muſt be owned, that great caution is required in the uſe of wit and humour as auxiliary to the cauſe of religion. They induce a levity of mind, which is too apt to degenerate to a wanton diſregard of every thing ſerious. Religion, like a chaſte matron, ſhould appear in a dreſs which excites ſentiments of reſpect, and forbids familiarity. When ſhe is introduced to mankind in a groteſque or gay attire, ſhe ought to be under the direction of a guide who can teach

teach her to preſerve an air of dignity in the midſt of her condeſcenſion: I mean to ſuggeſt that wit and humour, like that which is applied by Dr. Horne, ſhould never be uſed in religious ſubjects but by writers whoſe judgment is ſuperior to their comic abilities, and whoſe comic abilities would, like Yorick's, ſet the table in a roar.

Wit and humour have indeed been much more frequently employed as the enemies than as the auxiliaries of Chriſtianity. The natural man, as he is ſtyled in the Holy Scriptures, that is, the man who is unregenerated by grace, and but little read in theological learning, will find a multitude of particulars which, with but a ſmall ſhare of ingenuity, he may perverſely turn to ridicule. To be facetious on ſacred ſubjects requires more malignity than wit.

That Voltaire had wit, none can deny but thoſe who are deſtitute of it. In ſubjects of polite literature his wit is always delightful, though his judgment is ſaid to be not always ſound; but on ſubjects which concern things ſacred, both his wit and his judgment deſerve reprobation. Here his wit is always miſapplied, as well as often falſe.

But, allowing for the ſake of argument, that the wit of Voltaire in ſacred ſubjects is pure and excellent,

excellent, yet every man of ſenſe and ſerioufneſs will arm himſelf with caution before he ventures to give it his attention. A man has ſo much to gain or to loſe by his religion, that he will not raſhly incur the danger of loſing all belief in it. He recollects that the ſparks of wit are often like the fire of a nocturnal vapour, which ſhines only to ſeduce, or like ſome ſtones fabricated by art in imitation of nature, at once brilliant and falſe.

Reaſon only, or the powerful impulſes of conſcience, can influence a man of ſenſe in affairs of religion. Convince me, if you can, he will ſay, that my religion is ill-founded, and I will relinquiſh it. But wit is not able to convince. Its province is to amuſe the fancy, and not to perſuade the faculty of reaſon.

It may be rather difficult to avoid deluſion when it appears under ſo pleaſing a form as that of wit; but, as religion is confeſſedly of infinite conſequence to our happineſs, let us always prove the ſolidity of the witty ſentiment by the touch-ſtone of reaſon. An impartial application of that teſt will, I am convinced, become always favourable in the reſult to the cauſe of Chriſtianity. If we are led by curioſity to read the works of celebrated wits who have taken the part of infidelity,

delity, let us always diſcriminate between wit and argument, ſo as to be amuſed only by the wit, and remain unſhaken in our faith till the fortreſs of it is battered by the main force of ſuperior and commanding reaſon. Chriſtianity has ſtood like a rock of ages amidſt the waves of the ſea, for many centuries, againſt every attack whether of wit or of argument, and, under the Divine Providence, there is every reaſon to believe that it ſhall ſtand till time itſelf ſhall be abſorbed in eternity. Woe to thoſe who have miſemployed the talents they poſſeſſed in ſubverting the main column which ſupports the fabric of human felicity.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.